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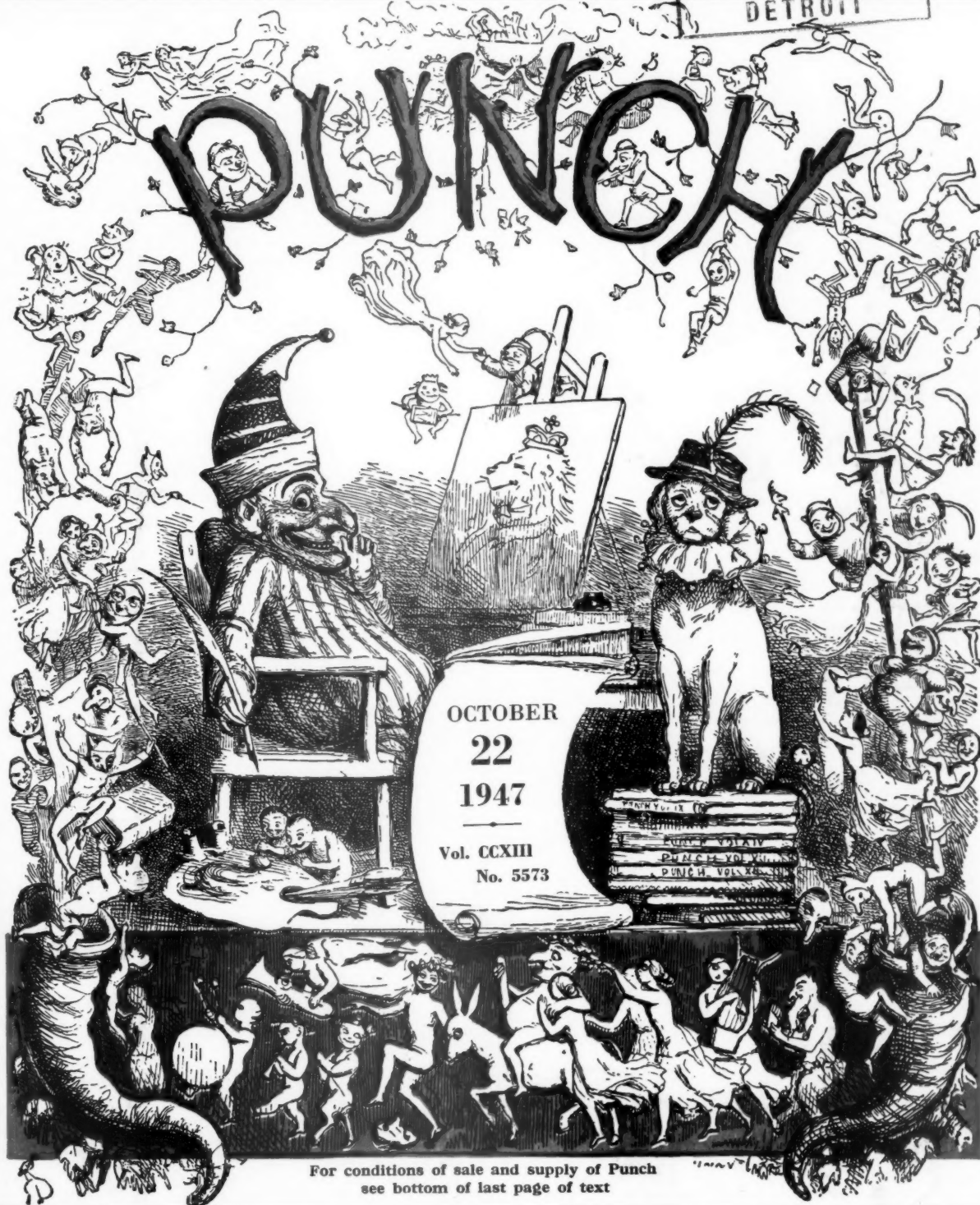
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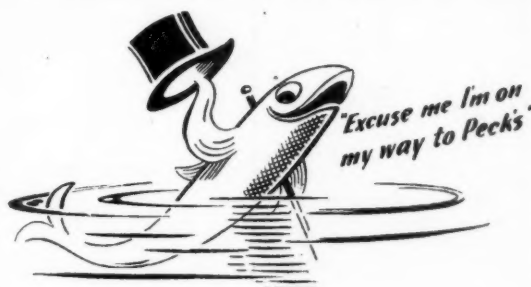
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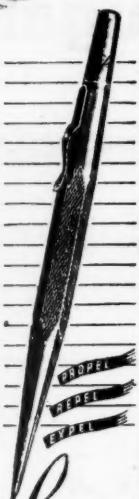
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"It's identical with the one I've been dreaming of—that delightful pattern, that trim cut, that perfectly-tailored collar! How did it get in here?"

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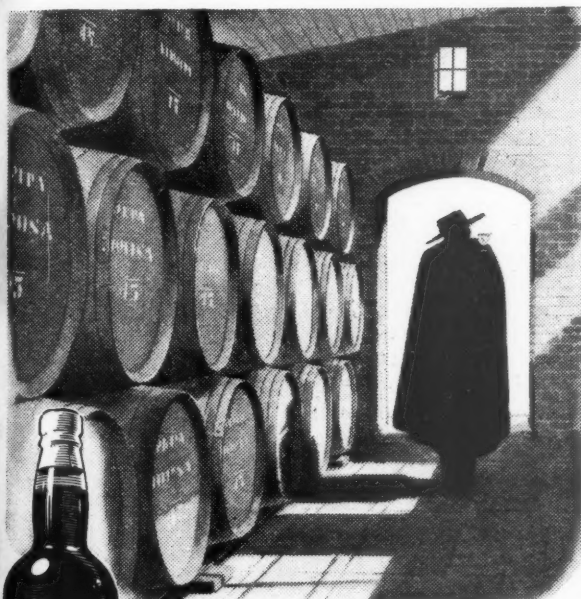
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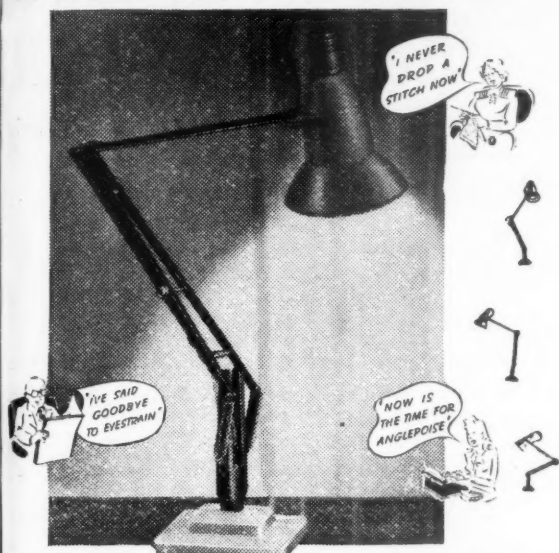


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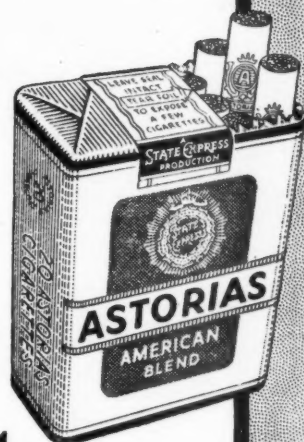
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## and the boy in the boiler suit

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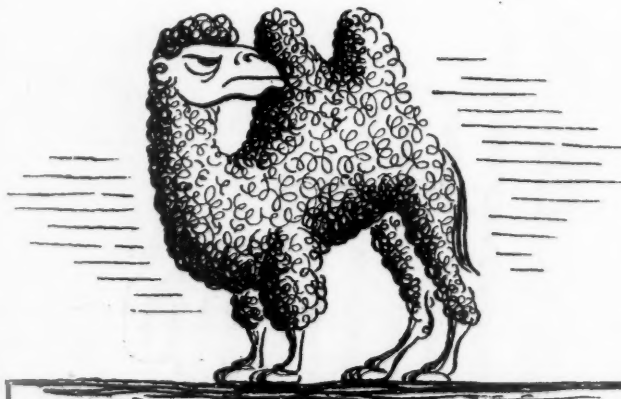
Opportunity is there from the beginning. Youngsters in TI are helped to continue their broad education for one day a week on full pay. Older boys, after an apprenticeship agreement with their Company, embark on a course of training in engineering or commerce which will lead the right lads as far as a university degree. At every stage they and their parents are advised by their Company Training Officer.

TI hold this policy to be at once a duty and an interest—for upon such opportunity depends the future, not just of TI, but of the whole nation.

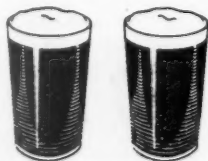
TI is a team of engineering industries which serve in more ways than may be realised. The component companies have made their own reputations in the fields of precision tubes, bicycles, electrical appliances and cables, wrought light alloys, pressure vessels, metal furniture and paint—the whole is TI.



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The Bactrian Camel,  
who lives in the Zoo—  
Could he do with a Guinness?



Perhaps he needs two.

Life is brighter after  
**GUINNESS**

G.E.1356.]



## how can I still

To smoke fewer cigarettes would be a sacrifice. To smoke inferior cigarettes would be a pity. To smoke none at all would be privation. Happily there is a middle course...

## afford 20 good

... to smoke good cigarettes as often as before—but to smoke good cigarettes in a smaller size. That is the answer! What a blessing we thought of De Reszke Minors.

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**MR.  
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writes:

"Medical Science and skill are employing every weapon in their power to combat this dread disease. But it is to us they turn for the necessary funds to help relieve the terrible sufferings of thousands of human beings. Our contributions will further research which will one day doubtless find a cure for cancer. Every penny we can spare brings that day nearer."

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**The Royal  
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# PUNCH

On

## The London Charivari



Vol. CCXIII No. 5573

October 22 1947

### Charivaria

It has been suggested that the Mineworkers' Union tried to prevent the removal of Mr. Shinwell from the Ministry of Fuel and Power. More coal and Horner business?

In replacing Mr. Shinwell by Mr. Gaitskell, the Prime Minister has at the same time reduced this winter's fuel crisis from Cabinet rank.

When the referee in a New York boxing match was attacked by both contestants and booed by the spectators he left the ring and refused to return. The analogy with the Palestine situation is obvious.

"What is the Fuel Ministry going to say this winter about games played under bright concentrated light—particularly squash? A club like Wimbledon, running three men's teams and one for women, will get through nearly a hundred matches."—*Evening Standard*.

Assuming, that is, that their application for a petrol lighter is turned down.

#### The Tarpuddle Martyrs

"To restore a chapel path four Roadwater, Somerset, boys rolled in three tons of tar macadam."

*"Sunday Express."*

"Wise husbands," says a playwright, "don't criticize their wives' clothes too freely." They just make allowances for them.

A professional conjurer who served in the Navy during the war remarks that he often gave impromptu shows while on night duty. He borrowed an audience from the watch of course.

"Does interest accrue on post-war credits?" asks a correspondent. We think not. So the question of whether the holder has to pay income-tax on his investment does not arise.

"The spiv can be patriotic," declares a writer. We'll believe it when there's a rush of padded shoulders to the wheel.

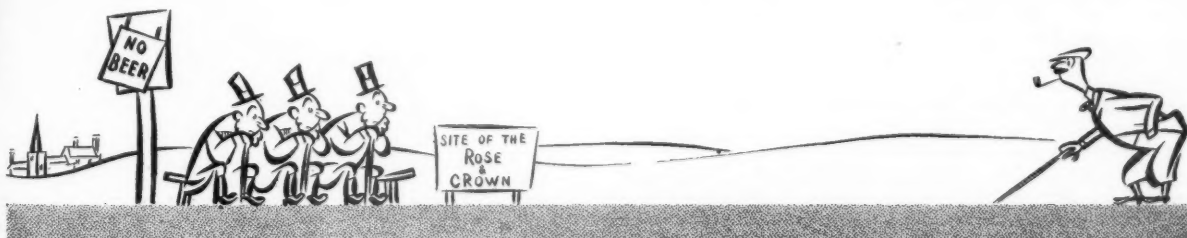
Air pilots generally experience a feeling of elation when climbing over several thousand feet. But not in cinemas.

The Government policy of encouraging large families is emphasized by a recent statement that only in households of six or over is it worth while collecting the new bacon ration weekly.

#### Warning to Cyclists

"William G— (27) was fined 5s after he had pleaded 'Guilty' to pedalling without a pedlar's certificate."—*Durham paper*.

A rambler laments the fact that many of our famous old country inns are disappearing. Has he had a look behind the "No BEER" notices?



## Malmsey Wine

ONE of the most lovable characters in the historical plays of Shakespeare—outside Falstaff and his gang—has always seemed to me to be that of 2 *Murd.* (*Rich. III*, I, 4) and a careful listening to the whole series of these plays in the Third Programme has but confirmed my opinion. I shall therefore say a few words about this kindly and well-meaning man. It is true that the B.B.C. rendering of these plays was incomplete. The three parts of *Henry VI* were most severely compressed, and one missed several passages like the following (I quote here roughly and from memory alone):

*Hamp.*: "Butcher and cannibal and bloody lord  
Didst thou not murder my old Uncle Kent,  
My stepson Geoffrey, and my nephew George  
And John my kinsman? Was not thine the blade  
Imbued with blood of my great grandfather,  
My sisters and my brothers and their sons?"

*Bed.*: "Ay, marry. But who killed Northumberland,  
Suffolk and Westmorland, and noble York,  
The Earls of Buckingham, and Mortimer,  
And gentle Cambridge and let out the blood  
Of honoured Scrope? Take that for each of them."  
(*stabs him several times*)

*Hamp.*: "Oh!" (*dies.*)

And the effect of this compression was to reduce the whole atmosphere of these three plays from that of a large metropolitan abattoir to a mere provincial slaughter-house; most of all was I grieved not to hear the last words of Rutland:

*"Di faciant, laudis summa sit ista tuae,"*

probably the only English earl of tender years and royal blood to be killed with a completed Latin pentameter on his lips.

But he died in a good hour. If he had lived a moment longer, Clifford, who killed him, would probably have made a joke about the Earl of Somerset.

To return to 2 *Murd.* (*Richard III*). Is it not fair to say that we find in this humble minister an epitome of all the most endearing virtues and vices in Shakespeare's gallery of heroes and villains—hesitation, piety, braggadocio, sudden pity, swift resolution, hardihood, an aptitude for meditative reverie at the most unlikely moments, magnanimity, penitence, self-reproach in the end? The Duke of Clarence is found asleep. 2 *Murd.* will have him aroused. But a reference (by himself) to the Judgment Day terrifies him. He will proceed no further.

1 *Murd.*: "I thought thou hadst been resolute."

2 *Murd.*: "So I am, to let him live."

1 *Murd.* begins to upbraid him. He threatens the Duke of Gloster's wrath. He reminds 2 *Murd.* of the promised reward.

2 *Murd.*: "Zounds, he dies: I had forgot the reward."

It may seem incredible at the present time that any manual worker should even momentarily allow the current rate of wages to slip from his memory. But so it is with 2 *Murd.* for a little while. Reminded, he passes at once to truculence and a kind of boisterous fun. He makes a speech (singularly ill-timed) about the inconvenience of conscience. He becomes forward with the deed. He swaggers not a little. When the butt of Malmsey wine is proposed it is he who says:

"O excellent device! and make a sop of him."

He is anxious to get the Duke killed quickly. You might take him for the biggest rogue in Christendom. But 1 *Murd.* counsels argument, I cannot imagine why. The Duke pleads. Both 1 *Murd.* and 2 *Murd.* combine to give

the poor fellow a résumé of recent English history and the ethics of the Wars of the Roses, the unpardonable offence of Clarence being that he has fought on both sides in the quarrel between Lancaster and York. A mild and frequent offence, one might have imagined, but it seems to give both 1 *Murd.* and 2 *Murd.* a feeling that there is something rather intrinsically noble in what they are about to do. Clarence, however, still objects. He shows considerable eloquence. It is 2 *Murd.* who breaks to the Duke the unpleasant news that his brother, Gloster, and not King Edward IV, had ordered his demise.

So far of course the character of 2 *Murd.* does not differ greatly from that of other *Murds.* in Shakespearian plays. But now comes the moment when Clarence, his blank verse increasing in pathos as he warms to his theme, appears to be gaining ground, and 1 *Murd.* decides to end it all with a dastardly blow.

Suddenly the whole edifice of 2 *Murd.*'s resolution collapses, and he cries:

"Look, behind you, my lord."

Alas! it is too late. 1 *Murd.* strikes, *exits* with body to find the promised Malmsey butt, and presumably, if he has any sort of sense, to obtain a signed receipt from the cellarman.

He returns to discover 2 *Murd.* completely and irrevocably penitent. He threatens him:

1 *Murd.*: "How now, what mean'st thou, that thou help'st me not?"

By heaven, the duke shall know how slack you have been."

2 *Murd.*: "I would he knew that I had sav'd his brother! Take thou the fee, and tell him what I say; For I repent me that the duke is slain."

[*Exit*

*Exit* and whither? Perpend for a moment on the position of this fundamentally good-natured artisan. An outcast for ever from royal favour, penniless, risking his life, unable to find employment at any ducal labour exchange, utterly at odds with his fellow employees, he passes, weeping, into the night. What future in industry lies before him? Here is self-sacrifice, here tragedy enow. Waiving the difference between drama and life I often see him in the part of 2 *Murd.* (*Macbeth*) and like to think he was responsible for the escape of Fleance; and later as 2 *Murd.* in the castle of Macduff, where I fancy that when 1 *Murd.* has killed the two sons, and the stage direction reads:

[*Exit* Lady Macduff, crying Murder, and pursued by the Murderers,

2 *Murd.* is running after her, but running rather slowly and turning towards the audience a merciful and deprecatory smile. But the part is not usually so played.

Malmsey wine, which, I now see is the title of this essay, was the name of a fluid exported from Napoli di Malvasia or Monemvasia, in the Morea. The grapes were grown in the islands of the Aegean and the Levant. No reasonable duke would have cared to be drowned in it, if there had been any other wine on the list.

EVOE.

o o

"Beside the Severn at Shrewsbury the lime trees, planted a hundred and fifty years ago, begin to lose their leaves."

Picture caption in Manchester paper.

About time too.



### SOLVITUR AMBULANDO

"They promised to put the country on its feet—and they have."



"... And this is the most gratifying concentration of industry we've effected to date."

### *Ballade of a Distant Prospect*

**W**HEN I am ninety-five, they say  
(And they are wiser far than  
we),

The bulls will calve, the cocks will  
lay,

And cream will drip from every  
tree;

Then men will howl for very glee  
And no one shall be sick nor cold;  
There will be marmalade for tea  
When I am ninety-five years old.

Then Culture shall resume her sway,  
And all shall hold an Arts degree;  
No saxophonist then shall play,  
No crooner drool his melodee;  
And drinks and slaves shall all be free

And food and laughter uncontrolled,  
And verses will command their fee  
When I am ninety-five years old.

All crime in that resplendent day  
Shall be abolished by decree,  
And Fear and Folly and Decay  
Shall find that they have ceased to be;  
Then Age and Ugliness shall flee,  
We shall be radiant to behold,  
And I shall do a round in three  
When I am ninety-five years old.

*Envoi*

Princess, if you are there to see  
The dawning of that age of gold,  
My precious, will you marry me  
When I am ninety-five years old?

M. H. L.

## A Hundred Thousand Years Each Way

IT is one of those hot, palaeolithic sort of days before the dawn of history. The sun, blazing down out of a clear sky, sucks up little swirls and eddies of mist out of the swampy valley at my feet, so that the outlines of the hippopotami wallowing there (in surprising numbers for this part of Wiltshire) become blurred and indistinct. The vegetation which clothes the valley bottom and clambers determinedly up its sides can only be described as rich.

But here, on the broad uplands, neither tangled undergrowth nor vaporous exhalations impede the view. A Neanderthal Man squatting on a barrow some few yards to my left (not of course the wheeled barrow of to-day—many æons of slow and painful progress still separate us from the invention of the wheel—but the simple heaped tumulus of the interglacial cist-people) chips steadily away at a moderate sized piece of flint. He is practising the Mousterian flake-culture. He is not aware that this is what he is doing; but I am. I know because I can see that he has struck a flake of flint off a larger lump and is chipping away at one side only, whereas if he had sold himself to the Acheulian or Levalloisian core-culture he would be banging at both sides turn and turn about. And I know he is a Neanderthaler because he is hairy and has the typically brutish look of a man whose skull is going to be measured by archaeologists in a hundred thousand years' time.

To my right an altogether more prepossessing Swanscombe Man is beating a rhinoceros about the head with a hand-axe. Two at least of the bones in his skull are practically indistinguishable in size from my own, and at any moment now he is going to demonstrate the superiority of his development by chasing the Neanderthaler into the swamp and taking over his cave, which he will then litter with core-culture axes of an advanced type. Afterwards he will go and lie down in a quiet corner of Swanscombe and wait to be covered up with Pleistocene gravel.

But I cannot wait to see this, for my attention is distracted by a terrible outcry in the north, heralding the approach of innumerable elephants and sabre-toothed tigers fleeing before the advancing ice-cap of the Fourth Glacial Period. As they pass me, *en route* for what will at a later date be the English Channel, they are met by northward-bound herds of mammoth, reindeer and woolly rhinoceros, animals better adapted to endure the cold, and the ensuing mêlée has to be seen to be believed.

The air has unquestionably turned quite chilly. It is, in fact, the coldest day for twenty thousand years, and already the familiar features of the countryside are altering beneath the impact of the new climatic conditions. As I watch, the lush vegetation of the valley swamps gives place to tundra-like grasslands, with here and there a wisp of scrub. The last elephant vanishes over the skyline. And as the sounds of flake-culture die away, for ever, a small dark man, whom I strongly suspect of being an Aurignacian, peeps at me over a lump of ice. Far away to the east the Peterborough Women, though I cannot see them, are busy impressing their crude earthenware bowls with the characteristic serrated pattern. It is the end of an epoch. . . .

It is also the end of the picture of prehistoric Britain that I have in my mind after reading the opening chapters of a book by Jacquetta and Christopher Hawkes which has just appeared, or rather reappeared.\* I believe it to be a thoroughly unreliable picture—not of course

through any fault of the joint authors', but because of a tendency my mind has to disregard the lapse of time in the opening chapters of works of this kind. When I read that "the next stray bands to arrive were Gravettians," I am not always sufficiently conscious that we have moved on perhaps ten thousand years since the last paragraph. I think of these Gravettians too much as of a party queueing up behind the Aurignacians to get their microlithic flints through the customs; and for this reason the sequence of events narrated above should be treated with a certain caution. Not all of them necessarily took place in the course of a single afternoon. The Peterborough Women in particular may have got in rather ahead of their time.

I have, however, succeeded in keeping the Beaker Folk out of it. They were Bronze Age people and would have been utterly out of place in a hippopotamus-swamp. They had round heads, strong bones and a habit of burying their dead with a beaker close at hand—hence the name. They came up from Spain, intermingling with the virile Battle-Axe People of Central Europe, and later, when they got to England, with the Peterborough Women. They were great mixers, these Beaker Folk. The result, naturally enough, was the emergence of the Food-Vessel Culture. The whole story can be read very clearly in the development of the crude Peterborough bowls which gradually grew longer and longer in the neck as they approximated more and more to beakers, until they were finally broken up by the angry menfolk and remoulded into serviceable food-vessels. The marks of the battle-axes, with which the necks were struck off, can still, if I remember rightly, be seen as far north as the Orkneys. It was at about this time, too, that Urn burial began to supersede the familiar long, or it may have been round, barrows of either late Mesolithic or early Neolithic days.

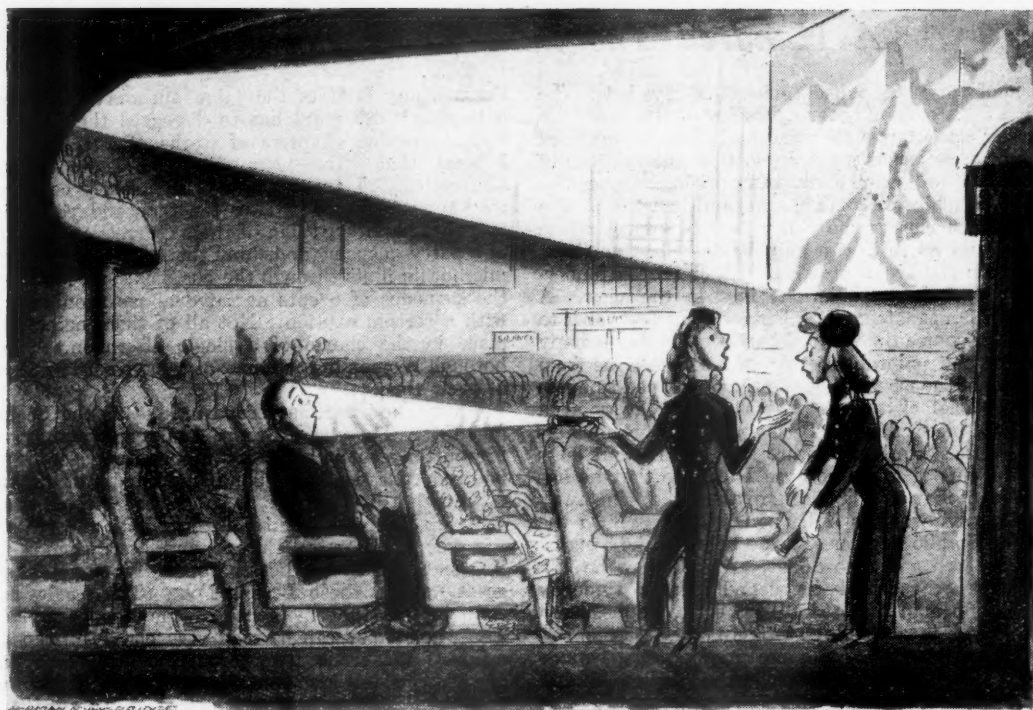
We cannot, however, go into these barrows now. Anyone who wants to know more about them should read the book—and a very excellent and fascinating book it is too. For the moment I want to make a leap into the future of about a hundred thousand years and ask whether, from the point of view of the archaeologists of that still distant date, we of the present era are taking sufficient precautions to identify ourselves. All our written records, all traces of our buildings, our clothing, our art may by then, it must be remembered, have been swept away by some great natural or man-made upheaval. Perhaps only one skull, perhaps mine, may have emerged from among the debris of the Fifth Glacial Period—prised up by some fortunate excavator on the south bank of what was once the Thames. Am I to be known to future ages as the Wandsworth Man? And am I to be dated to the nearest thirty thousand years? "Exhibit 16. The Wandsworth Man (*circa* 25,000?). Traces of gold in the upper jaw suggest that metal-working was not unknown even at this early date. Note the shallow brain-pan."

Worse still, what if some fragment of a domestic utensil chances to be discovered by the excavator within a few feet of my remains? Is it to be tolerated that the race to which I belong, the great British people with their long and splendid history, their achievements in art and science, their record of triumphs won in every field of human endeavour (including archaeology), should come to be known as the Tea-Pot Folk?

I desire that my skull shall, upon my demise, be clearly stamped "British"—followed by the date to the nearest thousand years.

H. F. E.

\* *Prehistoric Britain* (Chatto and Windus, 15/-). First published in the Pelican series, 1944.



"See, Effie—now isn't he like Gary Cooper?"

## Dual Personality

I WILL at once assure seasoned cinema-goers made suspicious by my title that this is not a study in schizophrenia. It is a sober statement revealing the reasons why I can never again go to Elmington. It is all through my namesake. Or am I my namesake's namesake? Let me take the middle course and say it is all through the surname we have in common.

Before I went to Elmington it had never occurred to me that there was anything noteworthy about my surname. It is a good, practical, workaday patronymic without any frills. My wife, when she assumed the name herself some years ago, discerned nothing unusual about it either. We used it happily together until we went to stay at this place Elmington.

We took emergency ration-cards of course, and our first morning there we went hopefully to the grocer's and laid them on the counter. The grocer looked at them in a way that made us a little nervous, as I am sorry to say my wife had worked a tiny fiddle with the meat-ration by having the joint early in the week and not mentioning

this at the Food Office. But it wasn't the meat that was interesting the grocer. It was our name.

"Is your name Smith?" he said.

I must here explain that it is not Smith, but I am pretending it is for the purpose of this narrative. I shall also pretend my namesake's name is Smith, because if I altered the name of only one of us the astute reader would quickly guess the name of the other. I have chosen Smith as my—or rather our—pseudonym rather than something Dickensianly impossible, on the principle laid down by G. K. Chesterton that the best place in which to hide a leaf is a forest.

I must also hasten to add that our name is not Leaf either.

When the grocer said "Is your name Smith?" I said "Yes, it is, rather." He then leaned over the counter at me and said (as I supposed whimsically) "Not John Smith, I suppose?" I did not know who John Smith was, apart from knowing he was not me, so I smiled apologetically and said "Well, no, I'm afraid not." The grocer appeared to accept my word for it, and there the matter rested until the

next day, when we went to collect the bread.

This time the grocer greeted me not like an old friend but with the respectful familiarity of a pensioned-off retainer.

"Ha, ha, Mr. Smith!" he cried. "Not on the air to-day?"

I then realized why the name of John Smith (only of course it was not John Smith, or John anything, or Smith anything) had seemed vaguely familiar to me. John Smith is a rather well-known broadcaster. I blushed fiercely, again denied that I was John Smith, and retired with a haste obviously attributed to modesty.

The following day he ordered four customers to wait until next week for their bacon, but gave me a wink and a limp parcel from under the counter. At the same time he croaked in a high drawl, "Oh, I say, eh, what?"

This seemed to both my wife and myself a highly peculiar remark for a grocer to make while serving bacon. Talking it over later we came to the conclusion that "Oh, I say, eh, what?" must be a sort of signature catchphrase employed on the air by my

namesake. It rather vexed us; we felt that if I *had* to be mistaken for John Smith he might have invented something a little less inane.

There is something indescribably wearing about continually denying an identity, even when the identity you are continually denying is not your own. At first my denials were received with tolerant disbelief and laid down to my being on holiday and not wanting to be made a fuss of. Later they were just ignored. Before the week was through I gave up my denials altogether. It wasn't only the excellent under-the-counter service we were getting. Partly it was the utter impossibility of getting this obstinate grocer to understand that I wasn't John Smith. Partly it was a weak desire not to disappoint him. Mainly I was just worn down into acquiescence.

From accepting my new rôle, I am ashamed to say, it was a short step to trying to play it. My wardrobe is limited, but I caught myself—and, worse, my wife caught me—dressing with a touch of bohemianism. In the shop I became another person altogether. Sometimes I was gay and dashing, at other times I was the dreamy artist. I treated my wife with romantic gallantry, or I was the absent-minded professor. I dare say my reading of John Smith's character was all wrong, but I felt I had to do something when our friend the grocer pointed me out to other customers—as he now invariably did. I bought bread with a quizzical little smile, I chose tomatoes with panache. There was a horrible morning when I heard myself observe "Oh, I say, eh, what?"

The thing was going to my head. I was quite annoyed if people didn't look sufficiently impressed when I was pointed out to them. Looking back, I can't blame them. I—or, rather, John Smith—was a hero to the grocer, but it didn't follow that everybody else shared his views.

In the local pub I went for some time unrecognized. It was irritating. I am really afraid that before long I should have tried the effect of an "Oh, I say, eh, what?" on the company. However, it wasn't necessary. The grocer looked in one evening and said it for me. He told everybody present, starting and ending with the landlord, that I was John Smith. After that I was able to buy a box of matches every day.

One Friday morning at breakfast my wife gave an exclamation. She was looking through the *Radio Times* and had come on a photograph of John Smith. We anxiously studied it from all angles and distances, seeking a

resemblance, and wondered if the grocer took in the *Radio Times*.

You see, the time for honest disavowal had long passed. I was now a definite impostor, and no impostor likes to be found out. By straining our credulity slightly we were able to agree that there was a faint likeness, and anyway glasses always altered a person's appearance. John Smith wore glasses; I didn't. When we went for the bread I kept blinking my eyes as though I found it a strain being without my spectacles.

As will be seen, we missed the full import of that photograph. We got it the following Monday evening when we were in the local. The grocer was there too. The radio was on, and I had just smiled and murmured "Good old Hibby!" when I realized what the announcer was saying. He was announcing my—or rather John Smith's—programme.

The expressions of amazement and contumely—I have only to close my eyes to see them now. I had to sit and listen in torture to my namesake establishing my alibi. It was John Smith, all right, even down to the "Oh, I say, eh, what?" (Neither my wife nor I thought he said it as well as I did.)

My reputation was saved right at the last moment, just as the programme ended and people were drawing deep breaths—either to denounce me or to hiss me. "That was a recorded programme," observed the announcer chattily.

But we had been given a severe fright, and we left Elmington the next day, regretted by all. We both promised faithfully to come back again, but now we can never do so. A pity. We both liked Elmington so much.

But I read in the paper to-day that John Smith, in response to an overwhelming request by local residents, has promised to appear at a charity concert at Elmington next month. I dare say he was surprised by the affectionate tone of their letter of invitation. He cannot know what an old friend he is to them.

But he *will* know. Next month.

We can never go to Elmington again.

○ ○

#### Warning

"For Sale, 1933 Saloon. Upholstered cloth, finished, hide."—Advertisement.

○ ○

"Refrigerator. Coldstream. Household size, almost new. Cost £1 10s. Will take £75."—Advt. in *N.Z. paper*.

We dare say, we dare say.

## ANOTHER CHANGED FACE

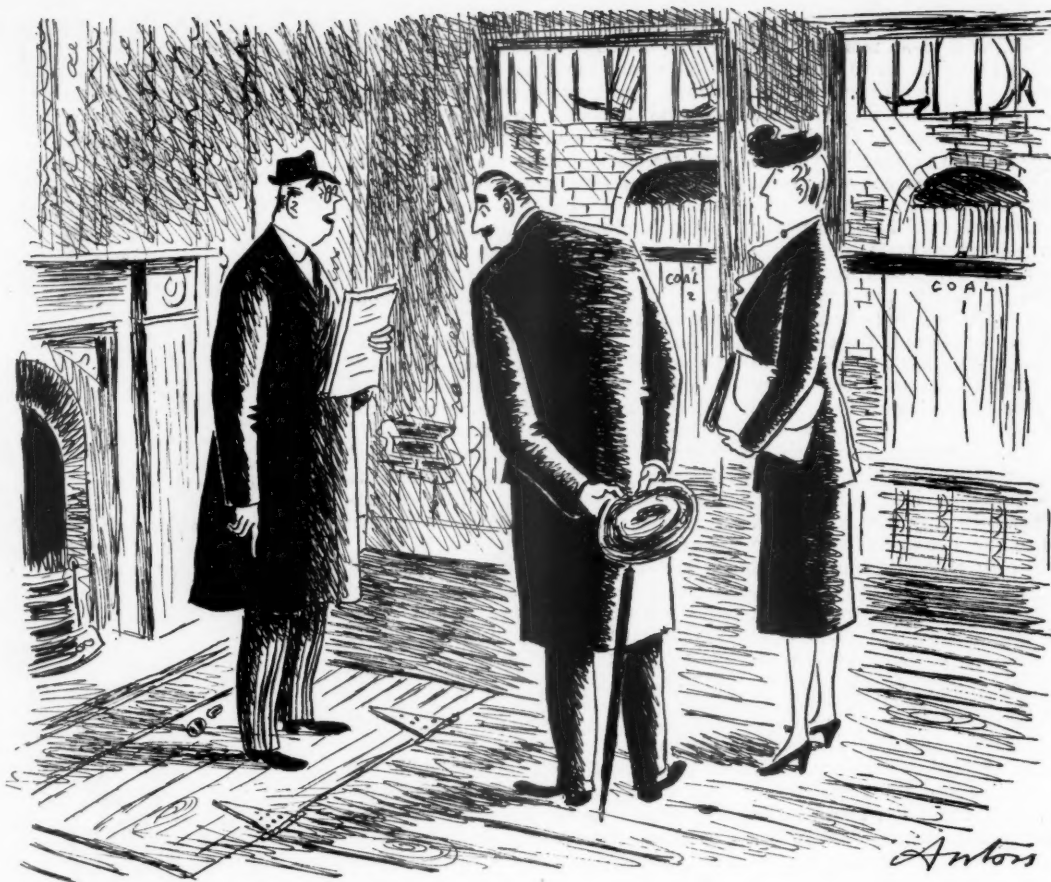
Fongasca



"Can you come to lunch? My dear, I'd love you to, but it would mean asking cook, and I just daren't risk upsetting her!"



"Can you come to lunch? My dear, of COURSE—it only means putting off all the things I had arranged to do this morning, and staying in to get it ready, instead of merely making a powdered egg omelette for myself at the last minute; it only means either using up most of the meat ration, or else spending the whole morning concocting made-up dishes out of my entire stock of substitutes; it only means going out and queueing for vegetables and more bread and something for you to drink, and trying to get some ices, and the off-chance of a cake; it only means cancelling all this afternoon's plans because I shall have to spend the time shopping for this evening's dinner to make up for what we've eaten at lunch. So DO come and bring George if he's there, and Jane and Peter and the twins, and your Aunt Susan if she's still with you, because I promise you HONESTLY and FAITHFULLY it's absolutely NO TROUBLE WHATEVER!"



*"There is one tiny snag—the tenants of the LOWER basement have their front door right here in front of the fireplace."*

### Character

OUR characters may be defined as either what we know ourselves to be or what we don't know other people think we are. I mean, they can't be both. On the one hand we know exactly what we ourselves are like, which would point to people's own assessment of their characters being the right one; on the other hand we know equally exactly what other people are like, which suggests that only the outside world can see you as you are. It is all a bit metaphysical (a term denoting to the public something up in the air but technical) and I shall leave it that everyone has a character, but most people cling to an idea that so far they have got by with only the good points showing.

Before we consider human character I want to give a few examples from the sub-human world. The squirrel, for example, has a well-defined character consisting of being or not being a pest according to whether it is red or grey, and of spending the summer getting ready for the winter. Scientists say that if they could find out just when a squirrel decides that to-day is the day it starts on its store-cupboard, then they would know all there is to know about these efficient little animals which to the ordinary public are very slightly birds because of living in trees. Owls also

live in trees, or rather on branches. Their character is of course undiluted wisdom. They are so wise that all they have to do to keep up their reputation is to look like an owl. Without themselves wearing spectacles they have become a model for those who do, and the rest of their character may be summed up as a bow tie and much good advice never given. Geese have, frankly, horrid characters. They are unanimously against the human race and were the first to find out that disapproval is best expressed by hissing. As a pleasant contrast we have kittens, which are entirely composed of fur and playfulness and think of mankind, if at all, as a kindly source of cotton-reels.

Moving still lower down creation's scale we come to kettles and blotting-paper. A less known characteristic than a kettle's refusal to boil until the water in it is boiling is its tendency to shed the string buttonholed round its handle. This was arranged by Providence so that people who have burnt their hands on kettle-handles should be as grateful for kettle-holder presents as they have to seem. On the whole a kettle's character may be summed up as negligible while not on the boil and foreseeably capricious during the process. The average piece of blotting-paper is either receptive in character or not; in other words the



"Do please remember the new staff signalling arrangements, Miss Digby—one boot for a messenger, two boots for a secretary."

sort of blotting-paper which will not blot—by which I mean will blot like mad—is as average as the sort which does all its public expects of it. (Readers not quite sure if this sentence is the right way round are advised to hurry on.) There is a sort of blotting-paper so little trusted that even when new it is used in little torn-off corners rather than smacked down whole. It is inclined to bluff itself off by being a cheery pink.

I SEEM to have got some way from the purpose of this article, which is the human character; but when we reflect on the similarity of purpose between a packing-case in a narrow hall and a customer having a nice think in a shop doorway we realize that we were not so far away after all. Returning to actual humanity, I want first to mention the tidy character. Mankind is rather sharply divided into the tidy and the untidy, for the really tidy could not be considered otherwise and even the mildly untidy can never hope to persuade others that it is just one of their not so tidy days. To the others a crumby saucer balanced on top of the Brontës is no more and no less than what it appears to be, which is a crumby saucer. Really tidy characters work on the principle that there is a place for everything. So do untidy characters, but they are apt to park a thing en route to its place and to get used to seeing it there. But what really distinguishes the tidy from the untidy is labelling. It takes a basically untidy person to label every jar, box and tin in a household and then think sadly a year later what the labels used to mean.

Initiative and enterprise are of course very important aspects of character. Initiative ranges from getting the better at an interview of the side that did not expect to be got the better of and organizing amateur theatricals; its essence is not minding doing more work than the people

without initiative would think was enough. Whether it therefore includes untying knots in string, psychologists are not sure, because they have noticed that string-cutters like to justify themselves as people of action. Enterprise is closely allied to initiative, but includes things like polishing shoes with floor-polish when the shoe-polish runs out or working through half a telephone directory for another version of an unfindable name, and may often contain an element of pig-headedness, or even, when it comes to running out of shoe-polish, of sheer inefficiency.

Optimism and pessimism have been defined so often that all I need say is that no wireless comedian is worth the name until he has had a shot at his own definition, by which I mean a definition made by someone else a very long time ago. Wrong-headedness, or the quality of holding opinions different from our own, is naturally the attribute of other people, and is common among even the nicest; in fact, anyone counting underdone beef as an opinion is unlikely ever to find anyone else absolutely right about everything. Still, people who go through life thinking it a sign of marked intelligence to like a fine day better than a wet one will not do so badly.

MY readers will be expecting me to say something about generosity; perhaps something about the way people are always getting called generous to a fault but never, in so many words, anything else to a fault. I should like to be able to explain the origin of this phrase, but even philologists are floored. They say that if they knew why people were generous to a fault they would know why treasurers are indefatigable, adding that they know treasurers must be something of the sort because if there is one thing that would defeat an ordinary person it is reducing piles of silver and pennies to the required number of pounds.

Finally, I must mention a small but notable manifestation of the sympathetic character. It consists of someone whom we have told of something awful happening to us remembering, when meeting us as much as a week later, to mention it. Apart from the actual sympathy, pleasant as that is, it reminds us that we are more memorable than we thought; and humanity's pathetic belief that people ought to remember everything about it, and its equally pathetic acceptance of the fact that probably no one does, are to psychologists quite typical, and as universally characteristic of humanity as all the other characteristics humanity exhibits when it is being typical.



"You put yourself down on our waiting list as two adults and a baby in arms."



"No, THAT'S the clear soup, madam, and THIS is the thick."

## CENtral 9161

THE average person—if I am anything to go by—can carry no more than a dozen telephone numbers in his head. Accurately, that is. Some average persons think they can do better than this. Theirs are the irritable, rasping voices you hear in the background whenever you pick up the receiver. Theirs are the tirades you see so often in the newspapers, the letters complaining of inefficiency at the Post Office.

Before the new London Directory (four handy booklets instead of two weighty volumes) was invented I could manage only ten numbers. Now I can do three from each handy booklet quite comfortably. Divide and conquer.

I must say that I like this new edition immensely: it is much more readable somehow than the old one. I have yet to meet anybody who could really lose himself in the old A—K volume, but I don't mind admitting that S—Z kept me awake half the night. And the P.O. has my permission to use those last two clauses in its advertisements.

As I was saying, it is a matter of the utmost importance to me that the twelve numbers I am capable of remembering should be twelve numbers I want to remember. To have infrequently-needed numbers on tap is to waste valuable resources of time and energy. BRImstone 9900 is certainly

easy enough, but shall I ever again have cause to ring Attison and Brew, Ltd., manufacturers of those little shilling-in-the-slot cigarette-machines we used to hire before the war?

To discover the twelve numbers which are most worth remembering you need a pencil and a wallpaper with not too much pattern about it. Scraps of envelope and those alphabetical pad-things people give you as Christmas presents are quite useless: you must have a large, clear surface which will remain in position every day for a whole financial year.

You get the idea? When the ticks opposite the numbers have been counted you have a complete record of your calls. With this as a basis you construct a frequency-curve on the opposite wall. Your twelve numbers can now be seen at a glance.

My own record for the period June 1946—June 1947, went like this:

WHItEhall 2121	..	6 calls
WHItEhall 1212	..	1 call
HAWthorn 6512	..	1 call
O .. ..	..	5,698 calls
TIM .. ..	..	365 calls
CENtral 9161	..	52 calls

It was not, as you will instantly observe, entirely satisfactory. It merely gave me something to work on. I immediately set myself to break down the 5,698 "O" calls into broad groups. I asked for the co-operation of the Postmaster-General. He did not reply. He didn't even give me the dialling tone.

People who lack a statistical training or bent can determine their twelve numbers empirically. Start off with "Fire, Police, Ambulance," and write down as many other generic groups as occur to you most readily. Then rule off after the twelfth entry, add appropriate numbers and learn by heart. Items such as "Taxi," "Logs," "Sitters-in" and "Inland Revenue" will appear, I suppose, in everybody's lists.

I now come to the main part of this article. When I checked my list the other day I discovered that four very useful numbers were missing—clean gone. In their places I found four numbers which at first appeared to have no possible bearing on my way of life. It took me an hour to trace them. They were the telephone numbers of four popular daily newspapers.

What had happened of course was that these numbers had registered themselves in my mind through sheer persistence and pressure of space. Every morning for months they had glared up at me from the Stop Press columns. Time and time again I had

fought them off. In the end they had triumphed.

Now I resent this very strongly. I don't want to remember the telephone numbers of the daily newspapers. I want my bookmaker back, my taxi, my butcher and my CENTral 9161.

It was the *Daily Express*, I believe, which started this Stop Press business. Why else should CENTral 8000 in thick black type lie right at the top of my latest dozen? Well, I warn the *Express* that I am not taking it lying down. If they want a fight they can have it. Sooner or later one number will have to accept defeat. And it won't be CENTral 9161. (See STOP PRESS.)

HOD.

## The Cold Plot

THEY have a pleasant custom at my new firm of bringing down a jug of coffee from the canteen at eleven o'clock; we flock out from our little laboratories on this floor to drink it.

The spirit of Science hovers over this coffee jug, as is only proper since we make our living by her. She is an honest piece of goods, but tends more to dowdiness than people would think who read about her in the papers. So I was rather surprised one morning when we were gathered round the coffee to hear Arnold, our diffusivity expert, talking about reviving the Plot this winter. I was afraid that my new colleagues might be plotting to blow up the Houses of Parliament or divert the Gulf Stream to flow round Cape Horn; but it turned out that we were only plotting the incidence of colds on our floor of the building, which was safer and just as scientific.

They had started this Plot last winter because Arnold and Meldrum, our microbiology expert, had decided to take the Phenophosphone Immunity Course, and the week after completing it Meldrum had a frightful cold which lasted three weeks. It wouldn't have been so bad, he said, if taking the Phenophosphone Immunity Course hadn't made him feel as if his head was a hive full of bees about to swarm.

This was in October, and Arnold didn't have a cold till November. Miss Bulstrode and Stanwick and Storr had all had colds in October, which, said Arnold, might show that the course had postponed his cold for a month, assuming that Meldrum's October cold was a special case. He discovered that Miss Bulstrode took halibut-liver oil and Stanwick took cod-liver oil and some vitamin pills, and Webb, who

was the only one who hadn't had a cold by then, gargled with salt water. This looked like evidence in favour of gargling with salt water except that Storr gargled with salt water too.

The spirit of Science demanded that all this conflicting evidence should be systematized into a Plot, and Arnold constructed this Plot out of graph paper and red and black ink. It ran from September to April, and the kind of treatment everybody on our floor had subjected himself to figured on it, and an incipient cold was indicated on every subject's red line by a little hump and a genuine fully-developed cold by a big hump.

Analysis of the Plot hadn't led to any far-reaching conclusions because, said Arnold, not only was the number of subjects far too small but the number of variables was far too large. We might have extended the Plot over a few more floors this year, but Miss Bulstrode said they had worked this kind of Plot out at a university with 4,000 subjects and still hadn't come to any conclusions. So the only thing we could do was to eliminate a few of the variables.

When we mentioned to Meldrum that we were starting the Plot again he seemed a bit short about it at first, but when he realized that nobody was suggesting that he should immunize himself again he said he was quite willing



"Coming, dear! I was just looking through some of my old things."

395

to tell anybody when he had a cold as long as nobody tried to make him take Phenophosphone or anything else. This gave us a blank or control to compare with our treated specimens; and Stanwick said that what with the rising cost of living he was cutting out cod-liver oil and vitamins and would be our duplicate control. So we had two controls and two halibut-liver oils and two gargles with salt water; and Arnold and a pulsator expert called Tugworthy from upstairs opted for cod-liver oil and malt. Meldrum soon had a roaring cold and it looked as if the research was going well. Then suddenly a whole crop of variables sprang up from nowhere.

One day Stanwick happened to mention something about his Bonodrone. This is one of those things you push up the nose and breathe in. Unfortunately Arnold heard this, and said that to use Bonodrone was a quite unpardonable variable. On further inquiries it turned out that Miss Bulstrode sometimes took vitamin pills but more often forgot to take her halibut-liver oil; Stanwick not only breathed Bonodrone but went to bed with aspirin, hot milk and whisky when the first sign of a cold appeared. Storr took aspirin and hot milk but no whisky because he had no whisky; Webb deep-breathed at his window, did exercises, and sucked lozenges if he coughed. Tugworthy gargled with disinfectant and more or less lived on aspirin from November to March. We could hear Meldrum sneezing away in his room and Arnold didn't feel strong enough to go and interrogate him about his variables.

Arnold was quite upset about it all. He said it was a poor sort of control that slept with a case of drugs under its pillow. What he needed now was a large range of coloured inks; it was hopeless to try to deal with all these variables in red. Meanwhile, he said, it was a good thing he had only been planning his Plot and hadn't actually plotted it yet.

The worst of it is I often sit next to Arnold at lunch, and have to remember if he is there that I mustn't take my liver extract and vitamin B tablets.

## March of the Robots

"All-Metal Bodies Advancing."  
Heading in "Commercial Motor."

"Non-utility steel furniture is likely to disappear."—*Daily Telegraph*.  
So just look carefully before you sit down.

## Palestine

**M**Y DEAR JAMES,—You ought to have had a letter from Palestine before this, but I've assumed you have kept yourself informed by reading the truth about us in the newspapers.

Palestine, as you know, is full of uncertainties. The first thing you have to do here in Jerusalem is to find out in which particular century anyone else is living. There are people who still think it's the Middle Ages and claim to have been living in the same house for 1700 years. To us it is 1947, but the Jews are in 5707 and the Arabs have it that it's 1366. When a witness before our United Nations Committee produced a map showing the whereabouts of the population of Palestine in the year 3000 B.C. the committee were visibly impressed and no official comment was offered on this piece of factual evidence.

On the other hand there are several people living in the next century or two and about that much ahead of the facts, such as some politicians and press correspondents. So we have given up bothering very much about what year it is, and anyway many of the things that happen in Palestine would be unusual at any time. The people who go by the Julian Calendar and are about a week behind the Gregorians don't really notice it.

As there are also three official languages (English, Arabic and Hebrew) a large part of the population are more or less continually engaged in translating. But the strain of this is relieved by the existence of three holidays a week: Friday for the

Moslems, Saturday for the Jews and Sunday for the others. The authorities hope that the Palestine problem will be settled before anyone else accustomed to holidays on Monday or Thursday wants to come here.

Nearly all problems have answers, but no one has yet discovered an answer for the Palestine one, and that is why there are more facts and statistics about Palestine than about any other place of its size. If all the books of statistics prepared for the nineteen commissions that have had a shot at the problem were placed on top of one another they would reach as high as the King David Hotel. You can tell from them exactly how many Jewish boys with blue eyes whose parents exported grape-fruit to Syria in 1946 now attend Arab schools and vice versa. It seems a pity that from all these figures and graphs and diagrams no one has yet been able to discover what they prove.

You can get most things in Palestine if you care to pay for them: what are short are such things as tempers and accommodation for mental patients. There is also a scarcity of wives, since all the British ones were exported to make room for the Secretariat staffs of Commissions of Inquiry and on what are known as security grounds. These grounds occur frequently and have something to do with a few malcontents variously known as terrorists (by the civil), thugs (by the Army) and Fighters for Freedom (by themselves). They are a nuisance to everyone and get denounced from time to time.

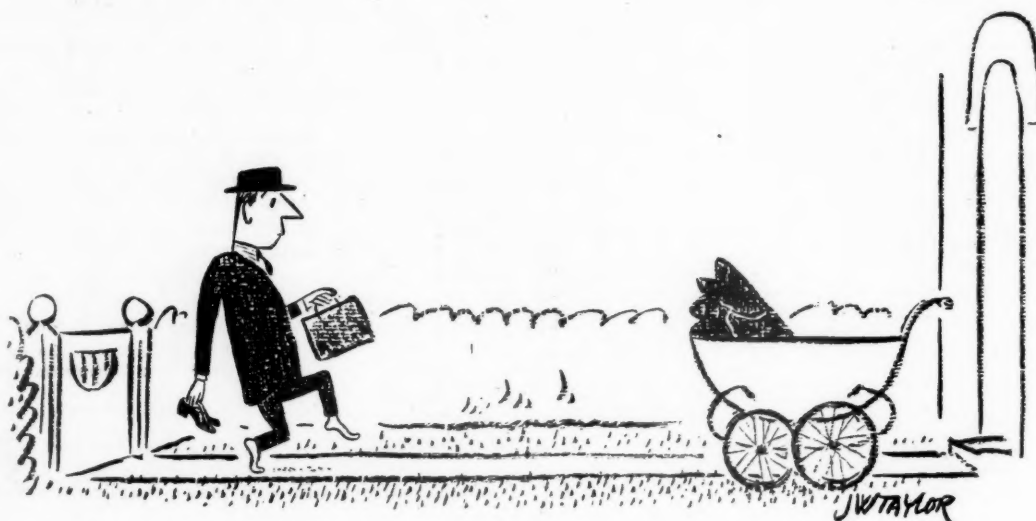
Every now and then we have a

Solution, and the next few years are occupied in showing up the mistakes in it, so that by the time the next one comes you can't imagine how anybody could ever have thought of the one before. There are no prizes, and nobody's decision is final.

When you eat your Jaffa orange this year you will know that it comes to you with the compliments of the only official body on which Arabs and Jews consent to sit together. Arab oranges are so remarkably like Jewish ones that you can't really tell them apart. Railwaymen like the orange season because the growers arrange for fewer mines to be placed on the track than at other times of the year when the trains may be carrying less valuable traffic such as the military. Dislike of the railway often leads people to extremes—passengers have been known to get out and blow up the station. This has a most accelerating effect on the train and disposes of a lot of encumbrances like signals and station-masters.

I must tell you in my next letter about the Mandate. An "A" Mandate is one that has more indefinite articles in it than the other sort. Our particular baby was handed to Britain by some people who have since disappeared (no, not the League of Nations), so that no one can be found to take it back. It is now so unpopular a child that everyone thinks it should be terminated, and no one doubts that its death will be the signal for paeans of joy, friendship and lasting peace in Palestine. Do you?

Yours ever, ———





THE BURDEN OF SINDBAD

## A Journalist Remembers.

X

"A NOSE for news," said Mr. McGargle, editor of *The Plough*, "is a possession indispensable to the aspiring journalist, and one that cannot be acquired too early. See Harvey McClutch."

"The pursuit of news," said Harvey McClutch, our chief reporter, "demands a strong personality." As he looked down at me from his great height, head thrown back and arms akimbo, I fidgeted restlessly before his fixed stare and monumental repose.

"I don't think my personality is particularly strong, Mr. McClutch," I said, endeavouring to assume an easy manner as I adjusted my tie with one hand and smoothed my hair with the other.

There was a long pause, during which Mr. McClutch continued to fix me with an unwinking stare. "What's the secret of a strong personality?" he demanded at last.

"I'm afraid I don't know," I answered. Mr. McClutch seemed in no hurry to speak again, so I jotted down a few notes on my shirt cuff and then whipped off my spectacles and gave them a good polish.

"It's silence!" exclaimed Mr. McClutch in a stentorian voice, making me jump so that I nearly dropped my watch, the interior of which I had been scrutinizing narrowly.

"There are two ways of making a man talk," he continued. "You can set him at ease with a joke, a hearty laugh, and a slap on the back, or you can daunt him with silence. I prefer the latter."

I could not help feeling that I was not fitted to succeed with either method, and privately determined to attempt to steer a middle course. I asked Mr. McClutch if he could give me any advice as to how, once I had gleaned my facts, I could best throw them into a readable form.

"First," he said, "you must create atmosphere. You can do this by a brief description of your surroundings and of your immediate neighbours. For example: 'This afternoon, sandwiched between a gap-toothed Hercules in nautical costume and a silent yokel carrying a mattock, I sat in a little hall, drab and bare save for a crude though vigorous sketch of the village diabolito team which adorned one of the walls, waiting for the appearance of perhaps the most forceful personality the world has known since the days of Peter the Hermit.' Then you want

variety and colour. Mr. McGargle places great faith in frequent quotations from the poets. I am not so sure. On one occasion, after listening to a three-hour oration by Ezekiel Tump, the veteran mangold king, I remember a colleague remarking that we might quote from Tennyson's 'The Brook' in our account. I looked up the piece, and made some reference to Tump as coming 'from haunts of coot and hern,' but it seemed to me that my work gained little by it. Avoid repetitions of the speaker's name. In my report of Tump's lecture I referred to him as 'the mangold master,' 'this weather-beaten wurzel-wizard,' 'sage of the soil,' and so on. Sometimes freshness may be introduced by a musical metaphor, thus: 'Every stop out, the sapient septuagenarian rumbled to a close.'"

It was not long before I had occasion to make use of Mr. McClutch's hints. That evening Mr. McGargle dispatched me to the Agricultural Hall, where the Farmers' Conference was being held, with instructions to report the proceedings, and to interview Arthur Ebbitts, the principal speaker, whose subject was to be "The Pig." "No man in England," said Mr. McGargle, "has come closer to the Lincolnshire curly-coated than 'Earthy Arthur,' as he is affectionately known

in the farming community. However, we will let the others cover the technicalities. Get some childhood experiences."

The place reserved for me at the Agricultural Hall proved to be next to a wall, but I saw no reason to abandon Mr. McClutch's formula, and after a quick glance at my neighbour I wrote in my notebook: "This evening, sandwiched between a bullet-headed gorilla of a man and a section of moist green plaster wall, I sat in the Agricultural Hall awaiting the appearance of perhaps the most forceful personality the world has known since the days of Ivan the Terrible." I felt that it would hardly be fair to Mr. McClutch to use his Peter the Hermit.

I was unable to catch the name of the first speaker, who launched a bitter attack on the Rhode Island Red in a voice hoarse with emotion and at a speed which defeated my newly-acquired shorthand. When the chairman asked "Any questions?" I rose to my feet, folded my arms, and stood for a moment in silence. "Let the speaker," I cried, "disclose his name, and then let him repeat his remarks about the origin of the Rhode Island Red strain." Whether, in the desire to impose my personality on the audience, I spoke too emphatically, I do not know, but my bullet-headed neighbour made a menacing gesture with huge, earth-stained hands, and I sat down, my question unanswered.

At last Mr. Ebbitts arose, to enthusiastic shouts of "Earthy Arthur!" He was a great rock of a man, with a mane of white hair and the eyes of a fanatic. He began quietly, in a silence that could be felt, with a description of the Large White Yorkshire breed, and I braced myself to keep up with him. Suddenly, his voice rising to a shout, he turned to the Berkshire. "Ears wide apart, erect, and fringed with hair." He played on the emotions of his audience like a great musician, bringing uneasy mutterings as he told of the pig's digestive troubles, and shouts of exultation when he gave the width across the back of the Lincolnshire curly-coated.

When it was all over I hurried to the platform, where Mr. Ebbitts was the centre of a knot of farmers who were making a confused effort to chair him. Thrusting myself between two bulky men, I faced the orator, folded my arms and fixed him with my eye. It soon became clear, however, that





*"Owing to last summer's plague of locusts a further serious curtailment of our national building programme must be anticipated."*

my silence was ineffective in the Bedlam of noise which rose about us, and my stare could not be as steady as I should have wished, since the convulsive efforts of the chairing party rendered Mr. Ebbitts an elusive target. An attempt to slap him on the back having been frustrated by my bullet-headed acquaintance, I wedged myself as close to him as I could and shouted *"The Plough!"* He put his hand to his ear. "It's a fine day!" I roared. "Aye," he replied. "Can you give me a few memories of your mother?" was my next question. "It may well have broken by the time we leave the hall," he answered. I repeated my question still more loudly, and catching the words "an abundance of dark chestnut hair," I seized my pencil eagerly. "The head is slender," he continued, "the snout fine, the pointed ears set on high." Here I was hustled aside for a moment by the crowd, but thrusting my head under an enormous arm I found myself once more face to face with Mr. Ebbitts, and asked him for some reminiscences of his father. In the tumult and confusion I was only able to make out the words "a short head, dished face, broad turned-up snout and full jowl. The body is short, thick and close to the ground." At

this point the chairing party had their way with Mr. Ebbitts, and he disappeared in a twinkling.

Speechless with mortification I returned to the office, where I later

confessed my failure to Mr. McGargle. He took it coolly enough. "Get the account from Peet, of *Byre and Stall*," he said. I did so, but it was a bitter pill.

## Swan Song

**D**EAREST friend, I have the willies  
And my head is bending low.  
Take me where the water lilies  
In the marshy bottoms grow;

When my limbs have ceased their motion  
And I cease to wheeze and blow,  
Sling my body in the ocean  
Where the great tides ebb and flow.

Bury me on Beinn a'Bhuridhe  
With the eagle and the crow,  
Where the wind shall howl with fury  
Covering my bones with snow,

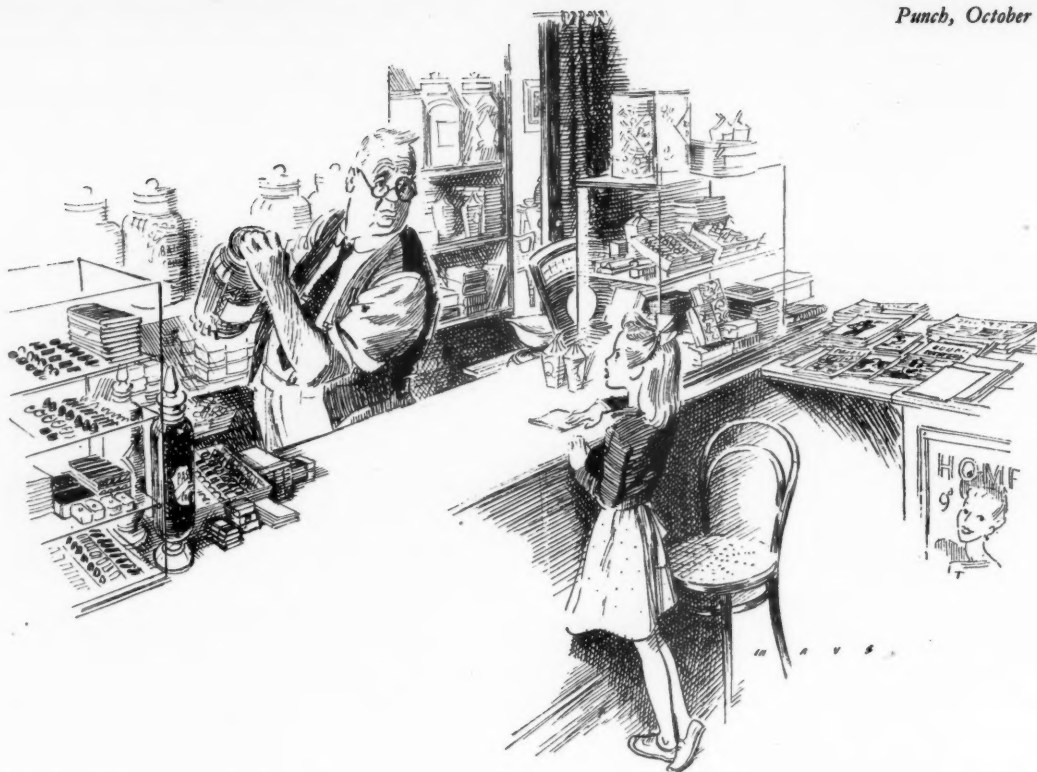
Lay me in a rustic wagon,  
Tie a tulip round my toe,  
Clasp my right hand round a flagon  
That it never shall let go,

Wheel me to the Bight of Benin  
Or the Delta of the Po,  
Lay me by the side of Lenin  
Wrapped in purple calico,

Take me to the vault at Woking  
Where they buried Uncle Joe,  
Strew my ashes, hot and smoking,  
By the side of Rotten Row.

With a host of horrid spectres,  
Marx and Manet, Proust and Poe,  
And the managing directors  
Of Dipsopoulos and Co.,

I shall wander in my nightie  
Waving dimly to and fro  
(With a mighty tiddly ighty),  
Learning how to mop and mow.



*"I do think you might have kept me some of my favourite sort with creamy centres, Mr. Palmer. After all, I've been spending my coupons with you ever since before I can remember."*

## American Commentary

V

GOOD EVENING. Let me begin by saying that whatever else the Senate decision to extend the Doghouse doctrine to Central Europe may mean, it does not mean an abandonment, either this year or any other year, of what I suspect you think of as a rather horse-and-buggy or, at any rate, none too forward-looking dollar-mindedness on our part over here. You have of course every right to ask whether Congress is, in fact, likely, as I speak to you, to give one-hundred-per-cent. full endorsement to a could-be over-generous Doghouse offer on tariffs, now that an all-weather deflationist like Representative Snoot looks as if he may carry the Bonehead Committee with him on wage-levels; and this is a natural enough question, as far as it goes. The short answer is of course that Congress is showing understandable unwillingness to let the administration play domestic politics with tariffs any longer, unless and until Secretary Birdseed shows a greater realization that business remains business, that what happened to war-time wage-levels

could, and still may, happen also to peace-time price-levels, and that short of a renewed Presidential readiness to talk turkey with employers on fish-glue prices, Birdseed plan prospects may soon be back where the Sleighride Institute said they were in the first place. Now, bearing in mind the traditionally close limits on the turkey-talking powers of the President in and around election year, one may safely take it that when Senator Brickenbacker of Hideho testified, as he did last week, before the Senate Poor Relations Committee that if they made a constructive move on exports right now it would be the first time in years, he was only saying what was already implied in the earlier Snoot statement on fish-glue, to the effect that the annual production of fish-glue by the dollar-expecting democracies is just one half of one per cent. of the amount needed under the Birdseed plan to float a stop-gap loan to South Amnesia and back, and that if it has to carry the Bonehead Committee it will not get even that far. To an already Snoot-weary House of Representatives this

sounded very much like saying that if business tried to use softwood price-levels to edge the President away from the Heartburn agreement, organized labour might use fish-glue to hold him to it. As the soft-wood lumberman sees it, though, there is all the difference in the world between a six-cents increase on a five-day week and a five-cents increase on a six-day week, especially if it means he may be priced out of the used-car market before next fall. As it is, coming on top of the Highball proposals to stabilize wages and push down prices, the Birdseed plan has probably put paid to any likelihood of a dollar loan—particularly one with political strings attached—seeing that last time they turned out to be attached to Senator Brickenbacker. Of course under normal circumstances the plan would come up for congressional approval before Congress went on vacation, but more than one congressman must be feeling that with the President trying to balance the world grain budget on top of the Highball proposals, he would rather go on it right now. The President, as it

happens, could very well retort that Congress has so far failed to produce a better-than-Birdseed food policy, that last time world wage-levels came up they pushed them down again, and that from now on they can go and play domestic politics in the used-car market. Whether the President will, in fact, take this line depends mainly on how soon Doghouse difficulties can be ironed out in the Senate, but partly also on whether, as many think, the position has now got so serious that Senator Brickenbacker should go himself to South America; though another suggestion is that he might be given to South Amnesia, and alternatively that he might be dropped on South Amnesia, depending on people's attitude towards foreign loans, and towards the Senator and towards South Amnesia. For the moment, however, it is doubtful if even the State Depart-

ment knows whether the Bonehead Committee will be able to divide Congress on world living-standards; but the President has let it be known that in his opinion long-term lending cannot and should not take the place of short-term spending, and that if he knew a way to keep Congress sitting whilst he slashed imports and killed the Doghouse offer, he would, to put it mildly, not tell Senator Brickenbacker. This could be taken as a hint that unless the Bonehead Committee put world living-standards back where they found them Congress may be asked to roll back prices, unfreeze wages, and fix dollar aid so high that it keeps out the softwood lumbermen. The most one can say with safety is that it is probably rather easier right now to get a clear picture of the way things are going than it will be after the next American Commentary. Good night.

## Autumn

"ARE you in the rudest health?" I asked anxiously, noticing the furrowed brow, the stooped shoulders, the fixed gumminess of eye.

"I'm writing an essay on Autumn," she said.

"For what object?"

"Miss Gallehawk."

She drew a couple of goal-posts on the nursery table.

"I suppose you wouldn't consider helping me?"

"I'll write it for you, gladly," I said.

"If we can agree a fee."

"That wouldn't be fair."

"I don't know what you children are coming to. There seems no sense of realism nowadays. When I was your age I was writing all his essays for a rich boy called Goldberg in the Lower First, at sixpence a time, and—"

"You can't write it," she said firmly, "but a few suggestions would be welcome. Miss Gallehawk says we should always be open to suggestion."

"Perhaps Miss Gallehawk is the realist. What have you said so far?"

"Autumn," she read, in a high, clear voice, "'is the season of mist and fog. Because of the sap going down all the leaves drop off and all the trees look naked and rather lost. There is a bitter chill in the breeze in autumn and when the mud comes—'"

"Stop!" I cried. "This is deplorable."

"What's the matter with it? That's autumn all right."

"It may be autumn, but it's terrible. You're falling into the elementary pitfall of thinking of what you're trying

to write about instead of the person you're trying to write it for. You'll never pass exams that way."

"I don't get it."

"Look here. This Miss Gallehawk—"

"She's jolly nice."

"I'm sure she is. But when you see her in the form room, forcing a kindly smile to her lips, you imagine she's always like that. Well, far from it. Picture her as she returns to her little room on a wet Monday evening, a sackful of essays on Autumn over her shoulder. Cold, hungry and no doubt depressed, as indeed which of us is not with beer at its present price—"

"She doesn't like beer. I asked her."

"What I'm trying to establish is that she's a human being and not just a machine for stamping six over ten in grubby exercise-books."

"But what can I do about that?"

"Appeal to her senses. Why I'm making this stand about Miss Gallehawk is because she's only the first of a long series of examining obstacles you've got to jump in the next few years, calloused men and women thinking darkly of their lunches and their overdrafts—"

"What does calloused mean?"

"I keep telling you it isn't the meaning of words that matters but how they sound. The world is full of underpaid men who are walking dictionaries, but it's the people who revel in the noise of words and haven't a clue to their meaning who get Cabinet jobs and carpets in their rooms in Whitehall."

"Well?"

"What you've got to do to Miss Gallehawk and all the Gallehawks who stand between you and the comparative peace and quiet of being grown up is to please them personally, to make them laugh and rub their hands and feel warm inside. When I was no higher than that rocking-horse I passed a very important military exam called Certificate A simply because on being sent forward to fix new headquarters for a battalion I arranged for the colonel's dinner to start with oysters and—"

"Very interesting," she interrupted coldly. "But it's Autumn I'm describing."

"All right," I said. "Now instead of congealing poor Miss Gallehawk with that beastly reference to mists and fog, why not give her something like: 'Autumn is memorable for fat crumpets toasted to the deep yellow of the farmhouse butter oozing deliciously from their well-salted jackets'? That'll bring some colour back to her child-wracked cheeks."

"Butter's rationed," she objected.

"All the more reason for laying it on more thickly than ever. We all read to escape to better lubricated times. Then I should put something like: 'Great log fires, throwing out their cheerful warmth and lighting up the gleaming silver on the tea-table with their darting flames, make coming indoors from the crispness of the afternoon one of the main pleasures of Autumn.' You see? A word-picture cunningly loaded with comfort and prosperity, guaranteed to make Miss Gallehawk relax."

"I see."

"And when you've said all you can on that tack I should wind up with a telling tag from the poets. It gives a tremendous air to the whole thing."

"Where do I find a poet talking about Autumn?"

"You don't. You just knock up a line, like 'Autumn, with her sere and graven face,' or 'Season of the beautiful drawing-in,' and stick a name in after it, in brackets, like Southey or Herbert Blenkinsop. I've been doing it for years and nobody's ever been troublesome about it."

"I see."

"You get the general idea?"

"Yes, thank you very much."

"Good. Then I'll leave you to it."

As I went out I looked over her shoulder and already, in a firm, round hand, she had added: "This mud, which gets soopier and soopier, makes things crooly hard for all the pore soles struggling with the orfulness of Autumn."

ERIC.



Frank Reynolds

"Look what the gardener's done for us, dear!"

## Alarm

THREE months ago I happened to be dreaming that I was Joe Louis when my alarm-clock piercingly informed me that it was 6 A.M. I forget whom I was fighting, but I landed a beautiful uppercut to his jaw, and found when I opened my eyes that the alarm-clock was lying on the floor three feet from my bedside table, with a broken glass and twisted hands.

I took the clock to our local clock-mender, and he asked me if I were in a hurry for it. I said that I was not, and he replied that he was glad, because he could not promise it for at least two months.

I enjoyed the next two months. Only a confirmed and hopeless alarm

clock addict can understand the happiness of throwing off the shackles, even temporarily. When the alarm-clock is ticking by my bed my subconscious mind is aware of it, and makes me wake at 4 A.M. and 5 A.M. and other absurd hours to turn on the light and see how much longer I have got. Then at 6 A.M. the thing blares out its hateful message, and I turn it off. I am a man of very strong principles, and the firmest of those principles is that a man ought to get up at 6 A.M., or to make every reasonable effort to do so. Very rarely do I actually leave my bed at that hour, but once the alarm has sounded all my pleasure in lying in bed has gone. I lie staring morosely at the clock as the

large fat hands turn with maddening rapidity. At seven or seven-thirty I can bear it no longer and climb miserably from my bed, thinking that I might just as well have set the alarm for seven, but knowing that if I had done so I would not have risen until 8.30.

At the end of two months I called for the clock and the clockmender said that it was not quite ready. A week later it was still not quite ready, and he evidently expected me to be rude. My kindly understanding almost unmanned him, and when I called a week later the clock was ready.

"You were so polite about it last week," he said, "that I got on with it straight away. It was really the turn of that grandfather over there, and the cuckoo also came in before you, but the grandfather threatened to report me to the chamber of commerce and the cuckoo sarcastically asked whether I thought I was a civil servant, so I gave you preference."

I determined next time the alarm-clock went wrong to be as rude as possible, but as things have turned out I shall take care that the alarm-clock does not go wrong again. Not wronger, that is, than it is now.

The clock part works beautifully, and it does not lose or gain half a minute a day, but in his eagerness to reward me for my politeness the clock-mender must have forgotten to test the alarm. It still rings as violently and piercingly as ever. Indeed, the rest seems to have done it good, and I have never heard it in better voice.

No longer, however, is there any liaison between the knob on the back by which it is "set" and the mysterious agency inside that makes the alarm ring. Meaning to make up for lost time I set it the first morning to go off at 5 A.M., but it actually went off at 9.30 A.M., when I was already up and about. Next night I set it for 6 A.M., and again it went off at 9.30 A.M. I have since tested it to see what happens when it is set for various other times, but the result is always the same. It seems firmly convinced that no sensible human being could possibly want to rise earlier. It scoffs at the idea of a three-mile walk before breakfast and regards people as mad who want to inspect the dew on the floweret.

Since I have discovered its new habits I have made it a rule to set the alarm always for 3 A.M. This enables me to go to sleep feeling almost painfully virtuous, because I cannot be absolutely certain that it will not go off at the advertised time. So far, however, it has not let me down.

# At the Play

*The Man In The Street* (ST. JAMES'S)—*The Dubarry* (PRINCES)

IF it is to plays about the makers and breakers of nations that we turn for the satisfaction of our thwarted dreams of ambition, it is plays about the little man in rebellion that soothe our more immediate indignations.

little man obliged to play for safety, and Maggie his wife is an equally virtuous mate but bored to tears by the awful regularity of *Harry*. In desperation she enters him for a Press competition which

is seeking the absolutely average man, and when he wins she and *Harry* and her frightful mother are translated on a golden carpet to an enormous suite in one of London's most palatial ant-heaps. *Harry* reacts badly to being rammed into the public eye; and goaded at last to mutiny takes advantage of a world broadcast to say exactly what he thinks of the way he and his fellow-norms are underpaid and mucked about and pushed into wars, and to urge that the time is ripe for a mighty stand against authority. (The man on the stop-button at the B.B.C. must have had the

though he is completely *Harry Smith*. I must confess I like him better in a part which gives his natural buoyancy more rein. For much of the play poor *Harry* is so crushed that his depression becomes infectious, and one never quite recovers from it. Miss MARY MARLEW as the wife of the Press dictator gives us the charm of good manners and sincerity, Miss BERYL MEASOR taps such humours as are left at this late date in a mother-in-law, and Miss HELEN CHRISTIE is a model model wife; while Mr. LLOYD PEARSON and Mr. KYNASTON REEVES, as princes of Fleet Street and the City, weather commendably the difficulties of grotesque caricature.

I am sorer than ever that I missed *Anny Ahlers* in *The Dubarry*, for she must indeed have been a brilliant actress to have turned such a sad patchwork into a popular success. It is at the Princes. Save for one or two tunes the music is pedestrian; the story is a nonsense of glittering snobbery; and as relief from it we have to suffer jests which would look tired in a provincial pantomime. The character of the piece is pretty well summed up by the fact that the best song—in which the Ahlers must have shone and in which Miss IRENE MANNING shows herself no mean performer—expresses its singer's respectable intention of giving her heart only to one man, while *Jeanne*, the *midinette* who sings it, discards no fewer than two lovers on the road to royal favour and exhibits such a happy knack of steering her passions in the most promising direction that if the play had continued for another hour or so nothing could have stopped her from adding most of the palaces in Europe to her collection. I think the addition of the words "at a time" would give the song more meaning. Of quite different quality, however, are the two brief ballets which brighten each half of the programme. They are delightful.

Miss MANNING, who comes from America, has a good voice and a pleasing personality, but is not, I feel, outstanding, though she got a great first-night reception. So did Miss ADA REEVE, who celebrated her sixty-four years on the stage by playing the dubious *Mme. Sauterelle* in spirited fashion. Miss PHYLLIS BAKER, Mr. BARRY MACKAY, Mr. FRANK LEIGHTON and Mr. JERRY Verno show up well, and Mr. HUGH MILLER produced capably, but it must be said that such an unmerited revival is less than helpful in replying to *Oklahoma!*

ERIC.



[*The Man In The Street*

AVERAGE MAN UNDERGOING MEMORY TEST.

Maggie Smith . . . . . MISS HELEN CHRISTIE  
Harry Smith . . . . . MR. BOBBY HOWES

*The Man In The Street* at the St. James's starts with the advantage of suggesting that the downtrodden legion of little men we like to think we are to be treated to a liberal paying-off of scores against the anonymous monsters of vested interest we like to think control our destinies; but the working-out is worthy neither of the central idea nor of the cast that struggles heroically to make it seem livelier than Mr. GEOFFREY KERR has made it. A comedy of the kind for which a stage is too restricted and far more suited to the effects of a movie-camera, it suffers from the fact that its butts are figures of fun without seeming particularly funny.

Mr. BOBBY HOWES is the hero, and nobody can better simulate the liver of a clockwork suburban life. *Harry Smith* is a bank-clerk, a hard-working

evening off.) After that he goes out with a bibulous chum from Africa and paints the town red enough to incarnadine every front-page the next morning. The newspaper proprietor and the chairman of *Harry's* bank, both apoplectic subjects, are saved from actually blowing up by the unexpected popularity of this broadcast, and its author, bulging with new confidence, finds himself with a whole branch-bank of his own and a wife who now drinks in his every word.

Such a plot is clearly full of possibilities, but Mr. KERR's handling of it is disappointing. The comedy has its moments, but it is apt to freeze into rather static situations where the slightness of the wit is evident, and even Mr. BASIL DEAN has been unable to prevent much of it from dragging. The best thing is Mr. HOWES, but



"Very well—leaving the idea of complete abolition on one side for a moment . . ."

### • Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Bath, 47 to 1947

So far as one knows, *The Building of Bath* (COLLINS, 15/-) is the only piece of civic appreciation that has issued from our ministries' war-time sojourns in provincial capitals. No civil servant has sung Lytham or Colwyn Bay. No minion of the War Office has even celebrated Woodstock. But Mr. BRYAN LITTLE, who has fortunately emerged from civil servitude into the world of authorship and politics, has handled Bath not only as a national show-piece but as the expression of a millennium of social history. It is a rather parasitic social history, for apart from the wool-trade that sent tough Chaucerian citizens on pilgrimages abroad, Bath has usually existed as a "resort." Its beauty derives from the local stone in which—luckier than London—it was enabled to express the Georgian flair for building, the skill with which its architects made the best of even hilly sites and the liberty allowed to local craftsmen to diversify the décor of interiors. All this loveliness—from the blitzed Assembly Rooms to ceilings, staircases, mantelpieces and hob grates still in private houses—is celebrated not only in the text but in a delightful series of photographs. The book is a model of how such books should be written, a tonic—despite its obvious handicaps—for the flagging pulse of civilization.

H. P. E.

### Nelson

The patience and industry which have gone into Miss CAROLA OMAN's *Nelson* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 42/-) merit cordial acknowledgment. As a Nelson encyclopædia this massive volume of more than seven hundred pages contains all that the most exigent curiosity could require, even to details about Nelson's youngest brother, Suckling, who, after an unsuccessful venture as a grocer and draper, took holy orders. But Nelson himself is drowned in an ocean of facts. A kind of Juggernaut flattening out whatever it encounters, this immense chronicle jogs always steadily on at the same even pace. It is not any lack of enthusiasm for her subject which inhibits Miss OMAN. On the contrary, it is because she believes Nelson to be irresistible that she has not troubled to make him so. On the jacket of the book she prints in large lettering: "I can never hear the name of Nelson without tears coming into my eyes—such genius, such courage, so transcendent a fate." This tribute, uttered by Mr. A. L. Rowse, represents a widely-spread feeling, for Nelson is probably the most popular figure in English history. But even Nelson's name is subject to the law of diminishing returns; its magic requires to be sustained by the art of his biographer, and Mr. Rowse himself, after a hundred pages of this book, might read on with dry eyes. There is, however, much of incidental interest in its pages; for example, Bonaparte's admiration of Nelson, a bust of whom he kept on his dressing-room mantelpiece.

H. K.

### Back to the Brownings

Stray volumes of *The Poetry of the Brownings* (MULLER, 10/6) abounded on secondhand book-stalls before the war. Mr. CLIFFORD BAX assures us that they are now not only hard to find, but not even sought after. Youth is inclined to regard the Brownings as fossils. To remedy both aspects of the situation Mr. BAX has produced an anthology of Elizabeth Barrett's poems and Robert's, with notes biographical and critical. It opens, audaciously enough, with a commented "digest" of "Aurora Leigh"—a verse-novel ten thousand lines long whose period atmosphere is about all that connects it with such distinguished contemporary work as Tennyson's "Maud" and Rossetti's "Jenny." Mr. BAX, however, does not dally long over Mrs. Browning and only gives one example of the atrocious rhymes she happily avoided in the "Sonnet from the Portuguese." It is difficult to go wrong over her husband, though "O Lyric Love" might have reinforced "One Word More" as a link between the pair. The most influential of his dialectical poems is undoubtedly "Bishop Blougram's Apology," a landmark in the autobiography of Eric Gill. Blougram and Gigadibs would surely have given youth more fun for its money than "The Flight of the Duchess," the only long poem printed excepted "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." The lyrics are an admirably representative selection.

H. P. E.

### A Warning for Mankind

Many years ago Sir NORMAN ANGELL shattered *The Great Illusion* that war is—even for the victor—a profitable undertaking. Two world wars were waged before humanity realized that Sir NORMAN had spoken the sober truth. To-day nobody entertains the illusion that war pays. Yet talk of war is on each man's lips chiefly because men to-day no longer fight so much for booty as to impose their opinions on their fellow men. Will a third—atomic—world war be necessary to teach mankind that to wage atomic and bacteriological warfare over matters of opinion is to commit mass suicide? Again, Sir NORMAN ANGELL utters

a minatory warning that man is about to rush headlong like the Gadarene swine down *The Steep Places* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 8/6) to the complete destruction of the human race. His all too short book is devoted to a lucid and impartial examination of the political tendencies at present shaping our destiny and out of whose conflict war threatens us. For Britain's problem he finds the solution in Anglo-American co-operation linked with an international—would not “supernational” be a better word?—organization ensuring “the rights which Western men have come to value.” Obviously Russia and the West are not to-day agreed upon those rights, yet their agreement is indispensable for the success of any international organization. There lies the crux of the problem that Sir NORMAN ANGELL believes will still find its peaceful solution. A wise book that all should read in these troubled days. I. F. D. M.

### In Tibet

*Tibetan Venture* (JOHN MURRAY, 16/-) contains the story of an expedition through the country of the Ngolo-Setas, undertaken by two Frenchmen in the summer of 1940. One of them, Louis Victor Liotard, was killed by Tibetan bandits, the other, ANDRÉ GUIBAUT, escaped and is the author of this finely written and often moving book. The two explorers set off in a melancholy frame of mind, for the news of the fall of France was just reaching them, but as they threaded the labyrinths of mountains and gorges leading to the vast tablelands of Tibet they found plenty of things, some quaint and interesting, others disquieting and sinister, to occupy and distract their thoughts. The account of the ambush in which Liotard was killed is a brilliant piece of writing, comparable, in its analysis of the author's sensations, with Stendhal's account of Waterloo in the *Chartreuse de Parme*. His later despair and feeling of isolation are even more impressively evoked; and then comes the return, late in September, to the outside world—“I did not know where lay the worst nightmare; in the solitudes behind me which I was about to leave, or in the countries before me, ravaged by war.” He was consoled, however, for the disasters which had taken place during his absence by the presence in London of a Frenchman called by his informants Tai Ko Lo. This mysterious figure turned out to be General de Gaulle; the author offered him his services, and was appointed his representative with the Chinese Government. H. K.

### Town and Gown

Universities are going through a difficult phase. Output is being boosted until the machinery creaks, and to the outside observer who remembers the delights of a more leisurely regime both dons and undergraduates appear to be working too hard to have time or energy left for the human benefits which a corporate academic life uniquely offers. In *British Universities* (COLLINS, 4/6), a useful little book beautifully illustrated, Mr. S. C. ROBERTS discusses with expert knowledge some of the problems accentuated by the hold-up of the war and by the whirlwind advance of science. He believes, surely rightly, that if universities are not to become mere centres of technical training small communities must be retained, and that expansion should be by way of fresh colleges; and he points out that, much as the older foundations may deplore their increasing financial dependence on the State, the cost of pursuing the newest offshoots of science is so prohibitive that private benefactions cannot be expected to keep pace with it. Mr. ROBERTS gives an interesting account of the growth of our universities. If one could rub a magic lamp, or

perhaps more suitably, a magic decanter, and visit any of the periods he entertainingly describes, one would certainly choose to be present during Elizabeth's magnificent descents on Cambridge. These were celebrated with an orgy of official disputation, the Queen showing up creditably in both Latin and Greek, and with stage diversions which went on until the last part of the programme had once to be abandoned, Her Majesty being “over-watched with former plays”—a condition sounding like the occupational disease of a modern dramatic critic. E. O. D. K.

### End of a Journey

There is nothing on the jacket of *A Boat for England* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 8/6) to tell how much of the story is fact, but one guesses that the author, SIGURD EVENSMO, writing of the Norwegian Resistance movement, has taken his own or other men's experience. It is translated into this language by SÖLVI and RICHARD BATESON and (mercifully, for otherwise the story, particularly in its ending, would be unbearable) the act of translation gives it a remote air. All the same, the terror comes through—“A dog barked and the noise met us like a flash of light in the dark.” That sentence is from a passage describing a heart-breaking journey to the coast where a small boat was to take a party of Resisters to a larger one (never found) bound for England. The author speaks of courage through the mouth of his hero—“Some may have convinced themselves that they will win through, others that they must die, but the opposite may happen because of a moonlight night or because a dog barks, or the dog is silent and the night is dark.” The story is told as by an ex-factory hand, who has a wife and little girl. Every now and then he breaks away from the narrative to address them, and here he is rather too articulate and lyrical. He is at his best when describing the German captors and their posturing—“Deepest in them lies black disquiet and fear. Hence the Prussian discipline and the slave mentality, and at the same time the scream against the mountain.” The fact that the party never reach England and end in a concentration camp leaves one dissatisfied with the title of a queer half-sordid and half-exalted piece of writing. B. E. B.



“His blood ran cold as he saw the sinister round blue eyes and pink face of Johnny Jones staring at him over the window-sill.”



*"It used to be nice here, just half a gallon from the sea."*

### Choosing a Shirt

**F**IRST, I thought, I'll walk all the way down the street on this side and see which shop has the best shirts, and then I'll walk back on the other side; by then I should have a pretty fair idea which shop is which—particularly if I make notes.

Here I must digress for a moment to explain that I am very fussy about shirts. I don't know what other people like and I don't care. I take a strong line and stick to it. To begin with, the collar of the shirt must be attached to the body. It is no earthly use trying to tempt me with two collars separated from the body or telling me that two collars are better than one—I've heard it all before and I just don't care. I don't like four thicknesses of shirt round my neck and I won't have them there, even if they are held in place with two collar studs. And, incidentally, I don't like these either. I don't like them for the usual reason and also because people

always used to try to sell me brass ones when I wanted bone ones.

I am also very fussy about the texture of my shirts. (I don't pretend to know anything about quality and rely entirely on my instincts to warn me if the shopman is telling the truth.) What I mean is, I like my shirts to be smooth. Wool makes me itch. Besides which, shirts made of that jolly warm tickly stuff usually have equally jolly check patterns all over them which I have always fancied fight rather a winning battle with my personality. In short I prefer a subdued sort of shirt. Another point (and you are not bound to see eye to eye with me over this) I like my shirts loose—flowing is perhaps a more descriptive word. The collar particularly must be free, though not unduly so.

And as I like to show about an inch of cuff I usually have to allow the sleeves to hang right over my hands the first time they are worn—the

mathematics of shrinking being a subject I have never entirely mastered.

However, to return to our muttons, as the French so incongruously remark.

Having strolled confidently down one side of the street and up the other I paused where I had started, to sum up the situation. I had to admit that I was in fact almost exactly where I had started. Very few shirts had presented themselves or their prices to my eager eye.

This I supposed, on reflection, must be due to the shops clubbing together to have a dressing-gown week. But as I did not want a dressing-gown I was not impressed.

After some deliberation I decided to toss for it. Selecting two likely looking shops I tossed—heads this one, tails that. That it was. In I went.

"I'd like to see some shirts," I said, "size sixteen-and-a-half, long sleeves and—"

"No shirts in the shop," said the man looking at me in an astonishing fashion.

"No shirts in the shop?" I echoed dazedly—"no collar-attached shirts in smooth material?"

"None," said the man, "nor none likely."

I laughed. I have a quick mind and I realized instantly I was dealing with a lunatic. I manoeuvred my way towards the safety of the street.

"Well, good morning," I said darting through the door. "I'm often round here and I'll pop in again some day."

There was no reply.

This curious incident didn't actually depress me but I couldn't help thinking it a bit rum. However, I decided the man probably had something psychological about shirts and preferred to make all his money out of dressing-gowns.

Next I entered the shop that had lost the toss.

"Good morning," I said airily, "I'd like to see some shirts—collar-attached is I believe the correct description."

"No collar-attached shirts in the place," said the man; "separate collars only—what size?"

I was just going to tell him with some irritation that I'd told him a hundred times I don't like separate collars, when I realized I hadn't, so I merely said firmly—"No, thanks. I always wear shirts with the collar (singular) attached and of smooth material."

"What size?" he asked, seizing a tape measure. "Fourteen-and-a-half I should think."

I ignored the insult. It suddenly dawned on me that here was another shop that must be making all its money out of dressing-gowns.

"Do you mean to say," I said with feigned interest, "that you have only shirts with separate collars and no collar-attached shirts at all—not one?"

"Only got two of them," he answered rudely, "a fourteen-and-a-half and a heighten. The fourteen-and-a-half should just fit you."

I realized I was in the wrong shop.

"It's charming," I said, "but I see it has a red stripe and I can never wear anything with a red stripe, so I'm very much afraid—"

"Oh, yes," he said proudly, "it's got a red stripe all right. They all have red stripes nowadays."

I felt relieved to be in the street again. It was a couple of hundred yards to the next shop, and as I sauntered along it dawned on me that the other two must be under the same management—obviously.

Before entering I carefully examined the window. There were those dressing-gowns again, but this time I was relieved to see they were interspersed with some carefully disposed silk squares and crossed hunting crops.

With a faint feeling of foreboding I crossed the threshold.

"Have you any shirts?" I asked. Somehow I didn't like to be too peremptory. But I needn't have worried, this man was a very superior type.

"Shirts, sir? Certainly, sir. This way, sir. Mr. Jenkins, show this gentleman some shirts, if you please. Thank you, sir."

"Ho," I thought, "now we are going to see some shirts."

"Now, sir," said Mr. Jenkins, "let me see, what sort of shirt was it you were wanting?"

"Were-was-were," I thought to myself, "am-is-do." But aloud I said cheerfully: "Oh, you know, the usual collar-attached, thing—smooth material, subdued pattern, ample armholes, long sleeves, buttoned at the wrist."

"I see, sir," said Mr. Jenkins (and I didn't quite like the way he said it)—"I see, well here is a very nice shirt of the sort you describe."

"But," I cried in alarm, "it's made of that horrible hairy stuff and is absolutely covered with enormous checks."

"It's the only type of collar-attached shirt we have in the place," said Mr. Jenkins in a grating sort of way—"though," he added, brightening, "we have it in two sizes, fourteen-and-a-half and fifteen-and-a-half."

"Thank you," I said, "but my shirts must be of smooth material and subdued pattern, and I take a somewhat larger size, sixteen-and-a-half or seventeen to be exact."

"Pardon me, sir," said Mr. Jenkins unctuously uncoiling the dreaded tape measure from the small of his back, "but you never took a sixteen-and-a-half in your life. If I might just measure your neck, sir."

I acquiesced feebly—it was a long way to the door and there were several assistants strategically placed between me and it.

"But," I added, thrusting it out over the counter, "you'll find my neck a good deal thicker than it looks."

Mr. Jenkins passed the tape round it, gazed fixedly at my waistcoat and triumphantly announced: "Fifteen-and-a-half. A size larger than that would hang off you in the most horrible fashion," he declared.

"I don't think you understand," I said coldly. "The shirt I have on is, or rather *was*, a sixteen-and-a-half until

it shrank. As you can see, it is now nearly throttling me."

Mr. Jenkins looked at my tie for a long time and then said in a soothing voice: "You like your shirts on the loose side, don't you, sir?"

"Yes," I said defiantly; "it is all a question of taste. I definitely do like my shirts loosely cut, though not extravagantly so—I feel I must be able to wag my head from side to side without obstruction."

"Quite so," said Mr. Jenkins, "and in this fifteen-and-a-half you'll be able to wag your head from side to side as much as you like."

I began to get annoyed.

"Look here," I said, "I don't think you quite understand. I have a very full chest which takes it up under the arms, thus making the sleeves shorter than they ought to be. Therefore, quite apart from the thickness of my neck, I need a larger shirt than you appear to think. Besides, we must allow for shrinking," I added in reverent tones.

"I have been out of the Army for two years now," said Mr. Jenkins, "and I have never worn a sixteen—let alone a sixteen-and-a-half."

I glanced cautiously round. The other assistants were standing in groups a little distance away watching, as I have seen Spaniards watch their favourite matador. I realized my position was not by any means an easy one.

"And," he continued, "my chest is as deep as yours—OR DEEPER!"

I hastily agreed.

"But," I said wanly, "the material is not very smooth, is it? Don't you feel it's rather hairy?"

It is.

## Fish Flash

[“Britain is to eat ‘Snook’ (pronounced snook). We shall get 10,000,000 cans in the spring.—*Evening Standard*.]

**I**N childhood you (and sometimes even I)

Have cocked a snook at harmless passers-by:

Grown up, a more respectful path we tread

And soon must learn to cook a snook instead. M. H.

## Frenzied Entomologists' Corner

"The sight of a new vicarage slowly arising from the debris of a partially dismembered Sidney Cottage, like a chrysalis emerging from its discarded embryo is one surely calculated to excite our most frenzied interest and delight."—*Kent parish magazine*

## A Mind Quite Vacant

**D**ENTISTS, who are the kindest and most thoughtful of men, have for long justly prided themselves on supplying their waiting-rooms with an ample selection of reading-matter. The waiting-room in which I now found myself was no exception to this rule; but since (as I had just discovered) I had forgotten my glasses, the newspapers and magazines spread tantalizingly on the table might just as well have been written in Chinese. In the absence of any fellow-sufferer with whom I might have felt tempted to converse (though there is a very salutary custom of silence in these places) there seemed nothing for it but to while away the next ten minutes in meditation on any subject not connected with teeth. I sat down by the gas-fire and began to think.

I started by thinking about Coal.

I thought of the extra twenty million tons of coal which, could we but unearth it, would (they say) instantly be transmuted into petrol, clothes, films, newsprint, refrigerators and Scotch whisky. Food, too, I believe.

I thought about this enormous chunk of coal lying underground in the dark, doing nothing whatever. I reflected that it had lain there for about eighty million years. Many people, in fact, think it has been there considerably longer. Others again have no idea beyond the obvious fact that it has existed for quite a long time. These last are ignorant people. I knew that I could safely assume that the coal had

lain underground for at least eighty million years.

And during these millennia what had been going on, so to speak, upstairs? I knew the answer to that one. First of all the carboniferous swamps where the coal was formed dried up. Rain no longer fell. The country became a desert. Life practically ceased; only a few fantastic lizard-shapes crawled heavily about the sun-scorched wastes of rock and sand. Millions of years passed. Then the desert was submerged beneath a muddy sea. Slug-like creatures crawled on the sea-bed; ugly, stunted fishes swam in the brackish water. On land the dinosaurs flopped and wallowed on the slimy margins of green-scummed pools. More millions of years went by. The sea became deeper, submerging the adjacent land and doubtless drowning the dinosaurs. Oysters lived in the sea; but there was nobody to eat them. The only other denizens of that ocean were fishes, uglier and more stunted than their predecessors; and the fishes did not know how to get the oysters open. Furthermore, they had no stout, no bread-and-butter, and no taste for oysters. It was a fiasco.

Millions and millions of years dragged by, day after day. The sea got deeper and deeper. Most of the fishes died, probably of sheer boredom. The oysters hung on; they felt they were so late anyway, they might as well see the end of the show. At last the floor of the sea began slowly to rise again.

In a couple of million years the sea had become quite shallow. An island appeared, thrusting its rounded shape above the heaving waters. The surviving fishes began to crawl ashore (a trait which present-day fish have lost) and, to avoid suffocating, developed lungs. Then the island sank.

The fishes who had changed their gills for lungs either drowned or were forced to swim around with their mouths out of the water: a position which exposed them to the derision of their less progressive fellows and gave them agonizing pains in the neck. After a while, however, the sea dried up rather suddenly; and "then," as Browning says, "all smiles stopped together."

The land which emerged, sodden with water and thickly littered with dead fish, was the country which we now call England. Its inhabitants, as I have shown, consisted exclusively of lung-breathing fishes with permanently warped necks. During the next five million years these creatures, or their descendants, had to endure tropical heat, icy cold, and (towards the end of this period) income tax at nine shillings in the pound. Nevertheless they survived, and in the course of time invented wireless, the steam-engine, the safety-razor and ultimately (I think that is the word I want) the atomic bomb.

At this point in my reverie the door of the surgery opened and the dentist intimated that I might come in.

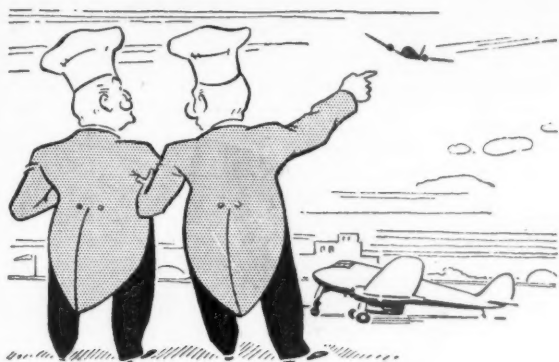


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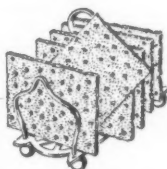
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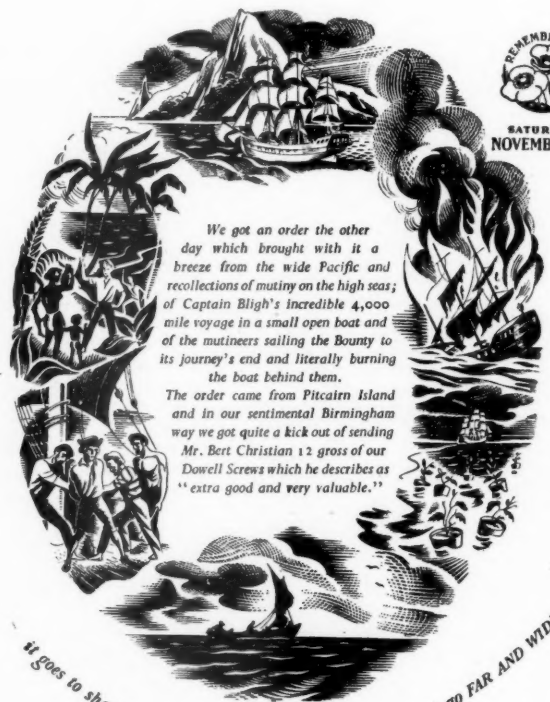
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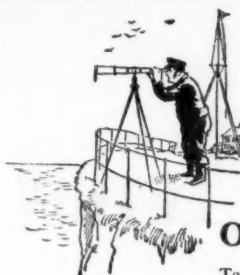
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I desire full particulars of your 'Heritage Endowment' Policy.

Name..... Date of Birth.....

Address.....

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# OPTREX *the* EYE LOTION

Only the best is good enough for your eyes

The extreme sensitiveness of your eyes makes it imperative that they receive only the best of care . . . and only the best of eye lotions.

During the war years, you may have experienced trouble in obtaining OPTREX. Its fine constituents—none too plentiful at the best of times—became very scarce, and yet we would not consider an inferior lotion. But . . . supplies have improved now, and you should not find it too difficult to have OPTREX on hand to soothe and help your eyes whenever they are strained

by glaring lights or overwork . . . or irritated by fog and smoke. Optrex Eye Compresses too are now available in limited quantities. Ask for them at your chemist. But remember—at the first sign of serious eye trouble, a Qualified Practitioner should be consulted.



*The famous Optrex 'exclusive design' eye baths are on sale once more. Price 9d. including purchase tax.*

*Optrex eye compresses are also available.*



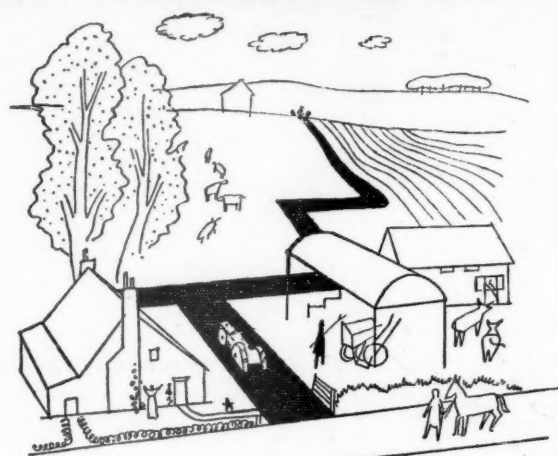
## Morning freshness

The fresh, cool comfort—the cleanliness, the clearness—you feel in throat and mouth after the morning gargle with "Dettolin" is more than just a pleasant sensation: it comes of antiseptic cleanliness, of taking a simple precaution against the common infections of the mouth and throat.

*The morning gargle  
is a pleasure with*

**'DETTOLIN'**  
BRAND  
ANTISEPTIC GARGLE

The surface that can take it



This Farm Road surfaced with COLAS is clean, dust-free and good to look at. COLAS can be laid in almost any weather without skilled labour or special apparatus. Resistant to wear and weather it lasts for years without attention.

The colour of the finished surface depends on the colour of the chippings used for the final coat. For all surfacing jobs—from a garden path to a public highway—specify COLAS, the long-lasting, inexpensive road emulsion.

## COLAS

EMULSION

Colas Products Ltd., 5-6, Crosby Sq., London, E.C.3. Tel: Popesgrove 6265



THE MOST TREASURED NAME IN PERFUME...

# CHANEL

"No other tyre  
will really satisfy  
me now"



The tread and rubber dipped cord body are moulded into a single unit of tremendous strength. Silent—yet thousands of sharp-edged angles, scientifically placed, provide greater safety and traction.

**Firestone**  
BEST TODAY ★ STILL BETTER TOMORROW

# Mentone

## SHOES for MEN

Eight Styles  
all at

45/-

NOW  
AVAILABLE

SEE  
LOCAL  
DISPLAYS

MADE BY



IN NORTHAMPTON



## THE COMMON COLD —a plan for its prevention

Every year, many thousands of people successfully avoid colds with the help of Serocalcin. Its use, both in the prevention and treatment of the common cold, has given consistently satisfactory results. Serocalcin is not infallible, but its record is such that it merits a trial by everyone subject to colds.

### Prevention of Colds.

Two Serocalcin tablets are taken daily for 30 days. In many cases this gives 3 to 4 months immunity from colds.

### Treatment of an existing Cold.

Three tablets are taken three times daily. Commenced in the early stages of a cold this often clears up the attack in 3 to 4 days. Serocalcin is suitable for adults and children.

The immunising course of 60 Serocalcin tablets costs 8/5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. Treatment pack of 20 tablets—3/4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d.

All who suffer from colds are invited to send to Harwoods Laboratories Ltd., Watford, for descriptive booklet "Immunity from Colds."

**SEROCALCIN** Regd.

FOR THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF COLDS

From the Largest Cyder Apple Orchards in the World

**WHITEWAY'S  
CYDER**

THE HEALTH EXPRESS  
FROM DEVONSHIRE



16  
PER SCREW  
QT. FLACON  
Bottle Extra

MEDIUM — SWEET  
OR DRY

Down in the heart of "Glorious Devon"  
—in the path-way of the sun—the  
Whiteways have been growing apples  
and making cyder for over 300 years.

## Lowis

"First-Class"

### BULBS

Double Early Tulips for both indoor and outdoor growing:

Collection D.E.1. 100 bulbs in 5 named choice varieties, 40/-

Collection D.E.2. 50 bulbs in 5 named choice varieties, 21/-

DARWIN Tulips for indoor and outdoor growing:

Collection D.T.1. 100 bulbs in 5 named choice varieties, 35/-

Collection D.T.2. 50 bulbs in 5 named choice varieties, 18/6d.

PARROT Tulips, as shown at the Ideal Home Exhibition:

Blue Parrot, per doz., 10/6d.; per 100, 75/-

Red Champion, per doz., 12/6d.; per 100, 95/-

Fantasy, per doz., 6/-; per 100, 45/-

DAFFODILS & NARCISSI:

Empress, per doz., 5/6d.; per 100, 40/-

King Alfred, per doz., 6/-; per 100, 45/-

Cheerfulness, per doz., 5/-; per 100, 35/-

We still have a few copies of our Autumn 1947 Catalogue. Send for your copy NOW, enclosing 1d. stamp.

LOWIS (SEEDS) LTD., 76 Boston, Lincs.

## Nicholson's

### Gin

The purest made

### The "Antiquary"

Finest  
Scotch Whisky

OF RARE:  
DISTINCTION  
WITH THE:  
RIGHT AGE:  
COMMANDING  
RESPECT:

Proprietors  
**J. & W. HARDIE**  
SCOTLAND

## NEEDLER'S

A  
Notable Name  
in the History of  
CHOCOLATE

NEEDLER'S LTD., HULL  
Established 1886

A PERFECT POLISH

## RONUK

FURNITURE CREAM

There's plenty in the shops

## SANIPAN

automatic lavatory cleanser

Sanipan keeps the lavatory pan fresh, clean and white. Sprinkle it regularly into the pan at night, flush in the morning and the job is done. Buy Sanipan from your chemist, grocer or chandler to-day; the big tin gives you extra value for your 1/3. No coupons.

CLEANS · DISINFECTS · DEODORISES

A product of W. & P. Walker Ltd., Liverpool.

SANITISE WITH SANIPAN

IT'S THE WEIGHT  
BEHIND THE  
EDGE



Ever-Ready super-keen  
Corrux Blades are hollow-ground from specially made surgical steel—steel with enough weight to take a hollow ground edge and hold it longer than ordinary wafer blades. After grinding comes honing and stropping. Each blade is stropped 4840 times.

THAT GIVES  
SMOOTHER, EASIER  
SHAVES

## Ever-Ready CORRUX Blades

THEY'RE HOLLOW GROUND — THEY LAST LONGER!

By Appointment  
Bacon Curers to H.M. King George VI

Previous Appointment to the late King George V  
C. & T. HARRIS (CALNE) LTD.  
CALNE, WILTS.

750,000 breakfasts  
every day!

A real old-fashioned breakfast will be back on British tables when, once again, you are able to ask for Harris Bacon. When increased pig production restores the flow of pigs into the Harris factory at Calne to nearer 1,000 a day there's a very good chance that you will again be able to ask for HARRIS Bacon by name. Yes, and for many other famous Harris delicacies as well.

## HARRIS

FAMOUS FOR BACON

SINCE 1770

HARRIS WILTSHIRE SAUSAGES

Good! it's g-o-i-n-g!

She's using

## D.D.D. PRESCRIPTION

for her skin trouble

This wonderful liquid remedy for eczema, dermatitis, rashes and all skin troubles, relieves irritation at the very first application and promotes rapid healing. 1/5 per bottle.

He's dreaming of the days when  
**VANTELLA SHIRTS & VAN HEUSEN COLLARS**

are easy to get again  
(of fadeless unshrinkable cloth with three sleeve lengths to every neckband size!)



COTELLA LTD LONDON W1

## LEMON HART RUM

The  
Golden Spirit



With Lemon, Orange or Lime  
A Winner every time!

For All RHEUMATIC complaints

## CURICONES

Obtainable from all Chemists

SPECIAL  
LATHER FOR  
SENSITIVE  
SKIN

## Cuticura

SHAVING STICK



*I am the mother of two boys  
and a girl and they're three fine  
reasons why I'll buy KIA-ORA  
when it becomes available.*

*I certainly remember its graceful  
bottle and the healthful  
goodness that came out of it.*

**KIA-ORA**

A REFRESHING THOUGHT: KIA-ORA MEANS GOOD HEALTH



**MERIDIAN!**  
*Underwear. Slumberwear. Knitwear*

J. B. LEWIS & SONS, LTD., Nottingham. Est. 1815. Suppliers to the Wholesale Trade.

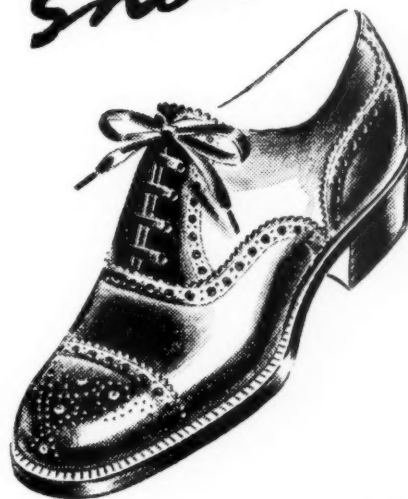


**WHO**  
*is Sylvia?*

No need to be a detective, not even an amateur one, to tell at a glance that Sylvia is a very particular person. Clearly she knows that loveliness should last. Her hands and her hair are perfectly kept; so is her beautiful silver brush. Gentle Silvo keeps that always softly shining, and sure of long life in Sylvia's service.

**SILVO**  
*Liquid Silver Polish*

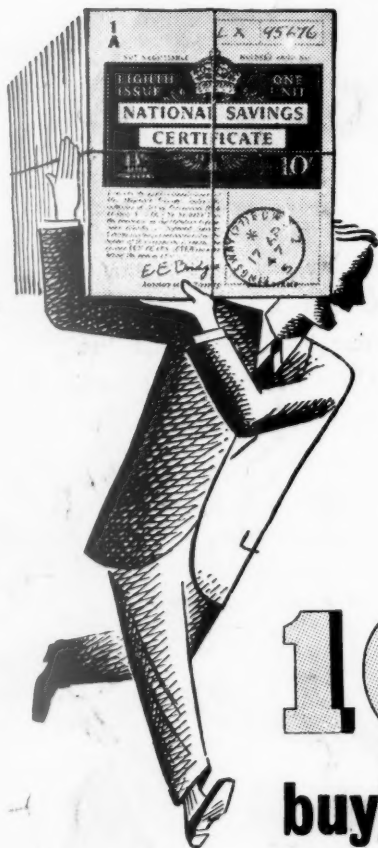
**K shoe**



*for a man*

Tan Willow Calif. 70/7 Limited stocks.

Take all  
you can carry!



10/-

buys the

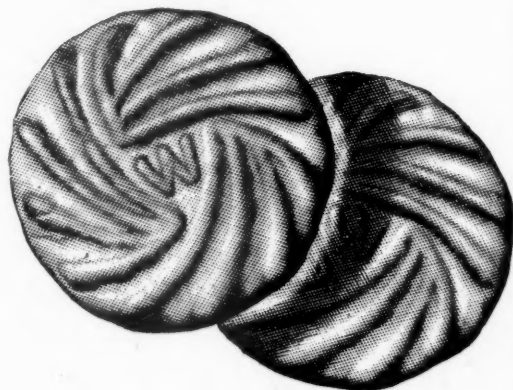
**NEW CERTIFICATES**

Make it your ambition to own your full share of these New Savings Certificates. Every one becomes 13/- in ten years. That's an increase of 30% tax free. And you can hold a thousand in addition to any other Savings Certificates you have. Get them from your Bank, Post Office or Savings Group. Every certificate you buy helps the Silver Lining Campaign.

*£500 becomes £650 in 10 years*

Issued by the National Savings Committee

This is one of  
the shapes  
of  
Weston's  
Dainty Fare



but only tasting will tell you of their sweet, short-eating daintiness. For they are indeed biscuits with a charming way of their own. Made only by Weston's, Dainty Fare are supplied throughout the country in limited quantities and you should be able to get them as an occasional treat. Price 1/6d. a pound.

**Weston's**  
**BISCUITS**